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ED START

Issue 405 March 2019

Modified supercars split opinions. Some see them as simply improving on an already awesome car, while others see sacrilege. There are no prizes for guessing which side of the fence we're sat on – especially when you peek at this month's cover.

Although we feature our fair share of modified exotica, we rarely run one as the main car. Not because they're not worthy but because for a lot of us they are just too far removed from reality – the majority of us can't afford a supercar, let alone the money to modify one.

So why is there a highly modified Prancing Horse on the cover of this issue? Because when we all read the story behind Mitchell Button's Ferrari 328 GTS, there was no doubt in our minds that it deserved to take the limelight.

This car is amazing in its solid, carbon-Kevlar widebody physical form. But it's even more amazing for what it represents; an owner who has come from nothing, to achieve a dream by his early 30s. The car is an inspiration. The owner more so! Next time someone says you can't do something, think of this Button Built 328 and go out and prove them wrong – winners never quit and quitters never win (unless they are giving up smoking – Midge).

Of course, there are some more affordable cars in this issue too, including a Mk5 Astra pick-up, a Pandem-kitted BMW E30, a stunning Mk5 Golf GTI and an awesome Audi RS4. We've also added a couple of new regulars to the magazine. DIY Day Jobs is our new 'how to' guide on making and fitting products, and FC Favourites is about the products we actually use on our cars – this month we kick the series off with our most-used detailing products. Enjoy the mag.

Big Love,
Slim Jules

Jules

Feature of the Month:

We've launched a couple of new regular features this month (DIY Day Jobs and FC Favourites) and I love 'em both, but I've got to go for Mitchell's Ferrari. I fell in love with this car when I saw it in the flesh at SEMA. It's every bit as stunning as Mike Kuhn's pictures make it look. The detail is phenomenal, the finish flawless and the story inspiring.



Next Issue **on sale** 1 • 3 • 2019



SLIM JULES
EDITOR

"My favourite inspirational quote? Expect problems and eat them for breakfast!"



MIDGE
CONTRIBUTING
EDITOR

"Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened."



INITIAL G
ART EDITOR

"Stay away from negative people. They have a problem for every solution."



GLEND A
WEBSITE EDITOR

"I need your clothes, your boots and your motorcycle."

Contents

FEATURE CARS

Ferrari 328 GTS 012

This isn't just the ultimate build, it's the ultimate story of succeeding at life.

VW Golf GTI 026

One of the most comprehensively modified Golf GTIs in the UK – and that's saying something.

BMW E30 Touring 054

The 3 Series Touring is a sensible, family car... But not this one. This one has Pandem arches, air-ride and a whacking great spoiler on the back.

Vauxhall Astra 062

Should Vauxhall have made a Mk5 Astra pick-up? On this evidence the answer is a resounding yes.

Audi RS4 Avant 074

What's big, purple, and goes up and down? No, not that you dirty lot. We're talking about this bagged Audi RS4 Avant



OUT THERE

Autosport International 068

It might sound like a tournament on the APT World Tour, but you won't find Roger Federer here. You will find lots of race cars and race car drivers though.

PRODUCT

Product of the Month 035

Products 036

Audio 038

Detailing Test 041



REGULARS

Front End 007

It's our monthly news round up. This month we tell you to buy an Audi S4, discuss the new Supra and take a look at what's on in February.

Top 10... 021

...Cars for the Brave! That's right, we're advising you to buy some of the most temperamental cars on the market. What could possibly go wrong (apart from bankruptcy)?

FC Favourites: Detailing 043

We test a LOT of products at FC, but which ones do we use ourselves? Look no further.

DIY Day Jobs 060

This issue we tell you how to make an Intercooler water-mist spray for under a score.



Staff Rides 081

Jules' E92 returns to the FC fleet, the in-house Meguiar's battle heats up and Midge fiddles with his new headunit.

Readers' Rides 091

Now for the most important cars in the whole world... yours.

Subscriptions 094

Want the magazine earlier, cheaper and without the hassle of leaving your house? Then look no further.

Arse End 096

It turns out that when Midge puts his glasses on he looks like the love child of Harry Hill and MasterChef's Gregg Wallace. True story.

Next Month 098

Damn! It's Friday 1 March, Ultimate Dubs is just days away and the new issue of Fast Car has hit the shelves! It's a good day.

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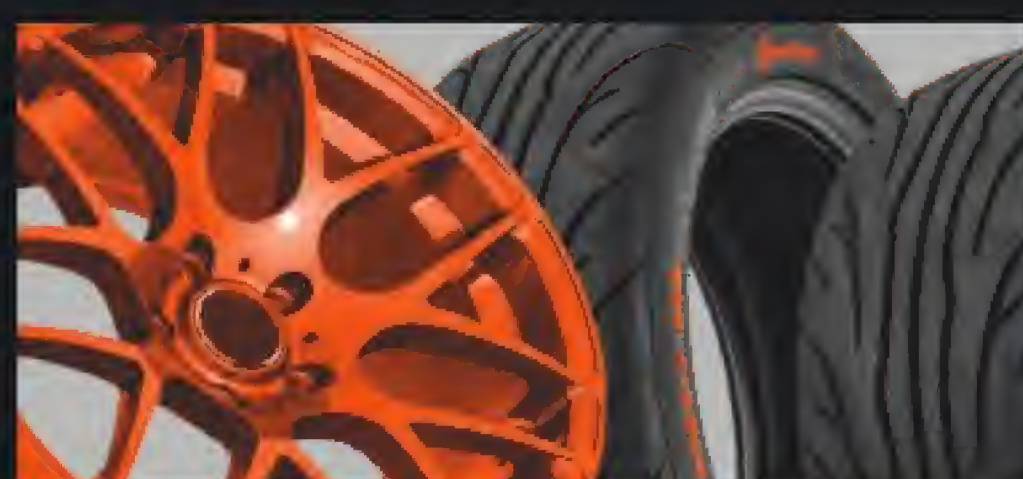
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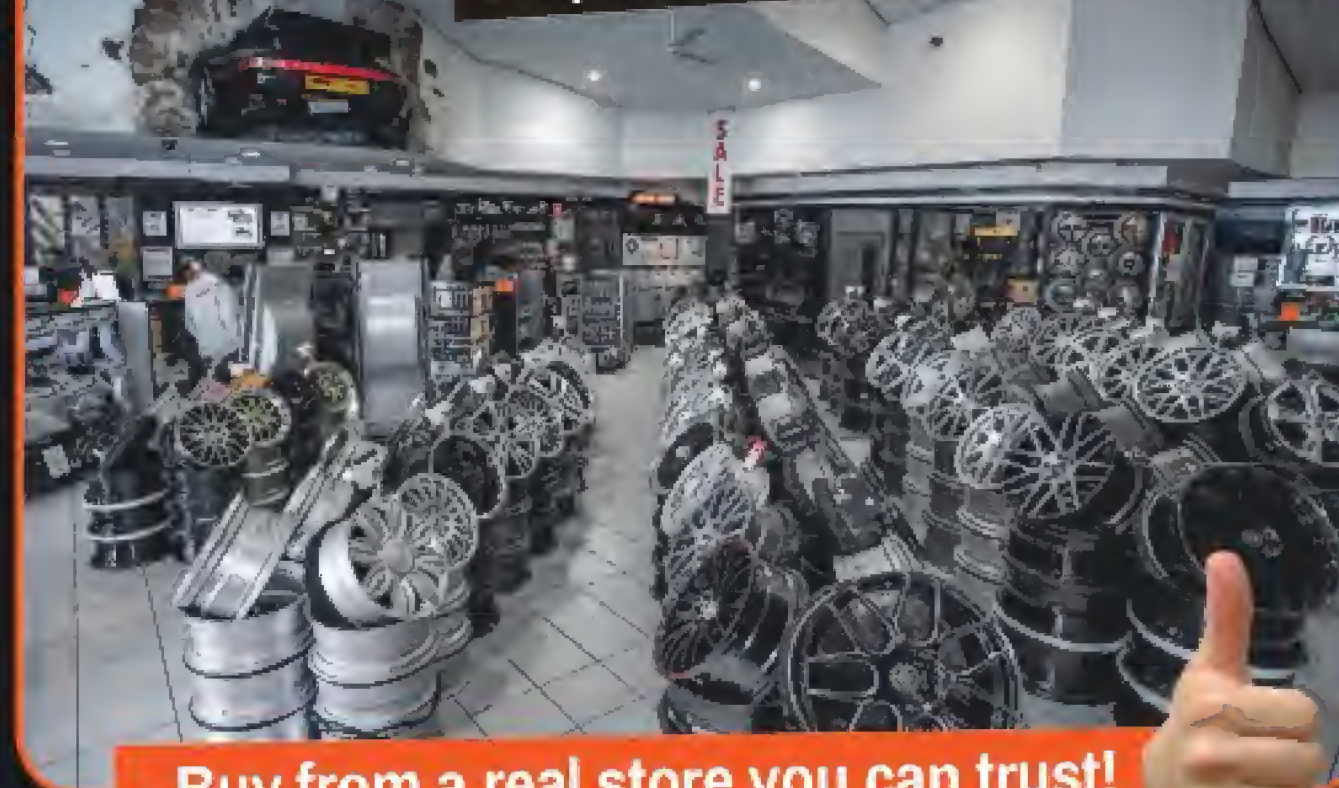
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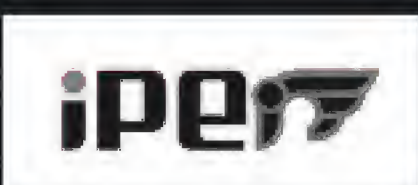


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UP FRONT

Virtual to Reality

The Mk5 Supra finally arrives! But it's nothing like the concept...

Few cars have had such a lengthy gestation as the all-new Mk5 Toyota Supra. It's been 17 years since the iconic Mk4 went out of production. Although the roots of the new car you see here stretch way back to 2007, when the FT-HS concept appeared in the States packing a V6 and a super-futuristic look. Fast-forward to 2011, and the Chief Engineer of the GT86, Tetsuya Tada, announced he'd been asked to make a Supra successor ASAP. The FT-1 concept popped up in 2013, with undisclosed propulsion plans, and then in 2014 Toyota applied to renew the Supra trademark name. In 2016, details emerged that Toyota were working with BMW on a joint platform from which the new Supra would emerge – likely featuring a front-engine-rear-drive layout and a turbocharged straight-six, like the old Mk4. BMW's G29-generation Z4 shares its platform and that launched last year. And now, fresh for 2019, the Supra is finally with us.

So after all the speculation, what do we know? Well, the GR Supra (GR standing for Gazoo Racing, the internal nameplate for performance models) will start at £52,695 in the UK. It's front-engine-rear-drive as anticipated, using BMW's 3.0-litre turbo straight-six to produce 335bhp, mated to an 8-speed auto with paddles. It combines a short wheelbase, wide track, low weight (1,495kg wet) and low centre-of-gravity to make it a fully capable and agile sports car – unlike the GT credentials of its predecessor – and



The GR Supra will start at £52,695 in the UK



It's front-engine-rear-drive with a 3.0-litre turbo straight-six and 335bhp

of course the handling was honed at the 'Ring.

The 0-62mph time is 4.3-seconds, with a limited top speed of 155mph. 19-inch wheels are standard, eight paint shades will be offered, and it comes with adaptive suspension and an active diff. Upgrading to Pro spec replaces the Alcantara trim with leather and adds 12-speaker JBL audio and a head-up display. Toyota will also be offering a 'dedicated rewards programme' to all Supra buyers, which gives access to 'special Supra-themed activities, events and branded items'.

The most contentious element of the car is the styling: we've already seen a bit of a purist backlash online from people who feel it isn't an appropriate continuation of the iconic Supra name. We'd have



The FT-1 concept is far removed from the new Supra

to disagree with that though. We reckon it looks amazing: taut, aggressive, muscular and hunkered-down. And, of course, it's going to be an absolute weapon on the road. We can't wait to have a go.

Not everyone's a fan of the styling!



Anniversary-edition McLaren P1 GTR



There's been a lot of talk recently about the polarising McLaren Senna, with its uncompromising performance, bonkers rear wing and see-through doors. And given that the 30th anniversary of Ayrton Senna's first F1 championship victory in a McLaren MP4/4 is now upon us, it was only to be expected that

McLaren would build a tribute car – and here it is. Decorated in the livery of that revered MP4/4, here's... a P1 GTR.

No, it's not a Senna-wrapped Senna, but it still makes sense. You see, this car was actually a customer commission for McLaren Special Operations; three years in the making (and thus predating

the 2017 Senna), that carefully painted livery took over 800 man hours to perfect. The owner also specified a Lexan engine cover, McLaren F1-style 24-carat gold heat-shielding, and unique splitters and spoilers.

So it's a P1 Senna. That'll confuse marque historians in the future.

BRABHAM TO RETURN TO LE MANS

Hot news from Brabham: they're returning to the Le Mans 24hr!

OK, some of you may need certain parts of that clarifying. Brabham is one of the most iconic outfits in motorsport history, founded by Jack Brabham and Ron Tauranac in 1958; former employees include Bernie Ecclestone, Gordon Murray, Ron Dennis and Charlie Whiting, and automotive roll-calls don't get a lot more stellar than that. Brabham-built cars won countless races in Formula One, Two and Three from the 1960s through to the '80s, and Jack Brabham competed at Le Mans, as did his sons Geoff and David. The team financially collapsed in the 1990s and there was much excitement in 2014 when David Brabham revived the name as Brabham Racing. Even more so in 2018, when the Brabham BT62 appeared.

This £1.2m hypercar boasts a 700bhp nat-asp V8, gorgeous carbon-fibre bodywork, a tubular spaceframe chassis, six-speed sequential gearbox, motorsport-derived suspension, and a GT3 race-style interior. It was essentially pointless at launch, being neither road-legal nor eligible for any race series. But now it's found its purpose: people who've bought a BT62 now get to be part of

the development programme, and the racers will enter the World Endurance Championship for the 2021 season. We can't wait to hear these monsters at full chat up the Mulsanne Straight!



NEW MAZDA3 REVEALED

The hatchback market is largely dominated by the VW Golf and the Ford Focus, and for good reason – they're both excellent cars with bags of potential. But we reckon the new-for-2019 Mazda3 is a rival to get properly excited about.

We're loving the crisp design and that angry face, and what's even more enticing is what's under the skin – the Skyactiv petrol engine in this car features two kinds of ignition (spark and compression), bringing the performance and refinement benefits of a petrol engine with the efficiency of a diesel. And it comes with a mild hybrid system. All very clever, and what's really cool is that it'll be available with all-wheel drive; Mazda haven't confirmed an MPS version yet, but the previous Mazda3 MPS models have been absolute firecrackers – and with the 2.0-litre Skyactiv and AWD, this new one would be a proper hoot. Watch this space.



We're loving the Mazda3's angry face

Appreciating Depreciation **Audi S4 (B6)**

Then: **£38,000**
Now: **£5,000**



The badging structure of hot Audis has been following parallel lines for some time – the S models are the really good ones, and the RS models are the really, really good ones. The thing is, the RS halo is so bright and shiny, it's easy to overlook the S cars, and this is a mistake – although it works out quite well for us, as it makes the used ones really quite affordable.

Look at the B6-generation S4. On sale from early 2003 until late 2004 in saloon and Avant form (with the cabriolet running to late '05), this looks to the untrained eye like

a nicely spec'd commuter TDI, rather than being all angry and wide like the RS4. But the B6 S4 is mighty – it's got a 4.2-litre 40v V8 mated to either a 6-speed Getrag 'box or a paddle-shift auto, with 339bhp to play with. That's ridiculous. It'll do 0-62mph in under six seconds. The Quattro system means it grips like a paparazzo to a Kardashian, and it's no stripped-out road-racer; you get comfy electric Recaros, decent audio and all sorts of gadgets. Back when they were new, these things cost around £38,000. Today? Around £5,000. That's a lot of bang for your buck.



Top 5 mods: ▲
Revo remap, BC Racing coilovers, Milltek cat-back exhaust, AEM induction, retro BTCC wrap

OUR TOP 3 AUDI B-PLATFORMS



1) Carl Taylor's RS4 (B5)

Back in the day Carl Taylor was famous for building epic VAGs and this was one of his last before he turned his attentions to other marques. It's in here because it's still cool today and so is the shoot!



2) Michelle Waters' RS4 (B5)

Audi didn't make a B5 RS4 saloon, we hear you cry. And you're right. But Michelle Waters did. And this is it. It's based on the S4, has lots of RS4 goodies and even more aftermarket ones.



3) Steve Thom's A4 (B6)

We raided the archive for this one (December 2014's magazine to be exact), but Steve's A4 proves you don't need to be rocking an S or RS badge to build a sweet Audi B-platform.



WHAT'S ON FEBRUARY 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Glenda - shoe fitting, 11am	2
3 Breakfast Club, Haynes International Motor Museum	4	5	6 Retromobile, Paris	7	8	9
10 Retromobile, Paris	11 Fueltopia Meet, Ace Café London	12	13	14 London Classic Car Show, ExCel London	15	16 Stunt Fest, Santa Pod Raceway PassionFord Meet, Ace Café London
17 Winter Classic Breakfast, Brooklands Museum London Classic Car Show, ExCel London	18	19 Initial G - dentist, 2:30pm	20	21 Jules - SlimmingWorld weigh in, 7pm	22 Retromobile, Paris	23
24 Race Retro, Stoneleigh Park	25	26	27	28 New Fast Car time (subscribers)		

WHAT'S ON TV: **Wheeler Dealers** - Discovery - Mondays @9pm **The Grand Tour** - Amazon Prime - released weekly
 • **World Rally Championship coverage** - Channel 5/BT Sport



THE ANGRY MAN

It's too easy to buy cars these days. That might sound mental, but it's true. Before the internet made everything searchable, we used to have to monster the Auto Trader with a pair of scissors.

It was a pain in the arse, snipping out all the cars that sort of fitted with what you wanted. Starting off trying to be realistic with the Under £1,000 section, then getting distracted by the sports cars in the colour section, Pritt-Sticking them into some sort of rough order, it'd take ages. Then you'd have to settle in for a good couple of hours of phone calls (on the landline, obviously). Only to discover every car you really wanted had, in fact, already sold.

So it was back to square one, being a little more liberal with the criteria: 'Yes, I can live with a bit of rust in the arches'; 'OK, I could probably make do with a GL - maybe I can find the Ghia bits at the scrapyard and bolt them on'. And when you eventually found a car that was sort of OK, you'd have to go and look at it.

You'd be amazed how many people these days bid on cars they've never seen (yeah, OK, we've all done it). But buying a car you've never driven or poked about in is stupid.

Online auctions flick on a part of your brain that shouldn't be involved in the car-buying process. As the seconds tick down to the deadline, you get over-excited, you MUST WIN AT ALL COSTS. And you invariably end up paying over the odds for a right shitter.

Stop that. Stop taking the easy route. Make a few phone calls, go for a few test drives, that's the proper way of doing it.

ONE TO WATCH

In this new section we'll be looking at work in progress builds and this month we bring you Plush Automotive's new project, a BMW M2. When Luke and his team decide to build a demo, there are no half measures. Remember his carbon RS6 from last year's cover? Enough said. It's the first time he's switched from Audi's RS badge to BMW's M badge, so we're looking forward to seeing how this one progresses, but you can guarantee one thing: it'll be one of the best M2s in the world.



Current Spec: ABP suspension; Brixton Forged CM10 wheels, MPerformance shift wheel, MMR paddles; Accuair management.

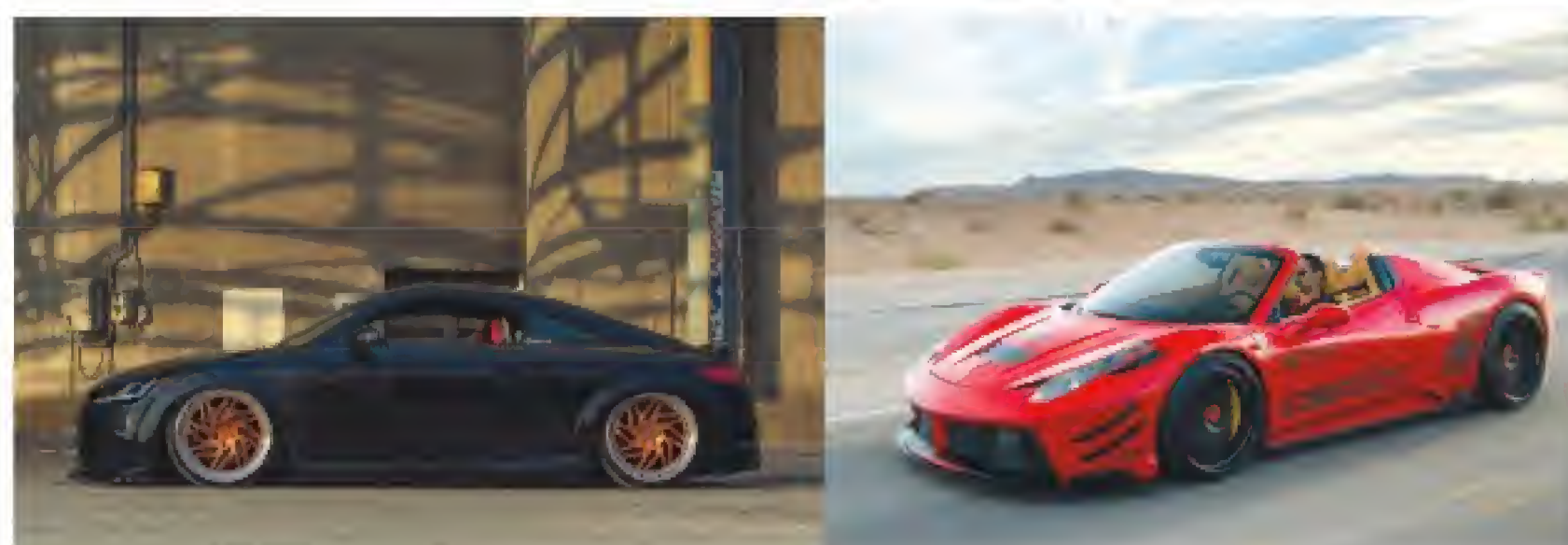


Pass the whisk mate, for making a cake

To be continued: Carbon fibre styling, full interior retrim, monster brakes, and more power!

COMING SOON

We feature a diverse range of car culture in Fast Car. Where else can you see a slammed Audi TT on one page and an 800bhp twin turbo'd Ferrari 458 on the next? Both of these cars will be featured in Fast Car in the coming issues.



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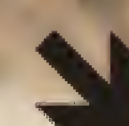


Redneck Redemption



Mitchell Button is a young man with an old soul. When his custom Ferrari 328 targa blew the roof off SEMA, he was happy to absorb the derision of the purists. Because this unique build is about so much more than petty egos...

Words: **Dan Bevis** Photography: **Mike Kuhn**



➔ **There's an aura that surrounds the** ownership of a Ferrari. It's not a car you just fall into owning. It's a dreamlike entity offering endless visceral thrills and demands deep pockets. So you might think having a custom Ferrari would be the ultimate expression of cash-rich hedonism. But don't be so sure.

"Ferrari – remember that name, Son," Mitchell Button's father told him when he was just a kid. "Not because of the car, but because the people who drive them don't wake up every day with decisions of either paying rent or feeding their family". A hard-working, blue collar guy, Mitchell grew up with the importance of earning your way in life and keeping dreams alive hard-wired into his very DNA. And while many feature car owners we talk to have an endearing tale to tell about what they drive because their dad used to have one, Mitchell's story has a rather steelier edge.

"People say, 'You can take the boy out of the trailer park, but you can't take the trailer park out of the boy'. And I'm proud to fit this stereotype," he tells us. "I was an accidental birth, born into redneck poverty because my family couldn't afford the procedure to eliminate my future. From that point, there's only one way a man can go: up. I appreciate being born with a strong hand, even if many would consider it a weak one. My father was a good man, but not a good father. The only lessons I learned from him pertained to motorsport."

MAINTAINING HOPE

With a troubled family situation, Mitchell had to fight from day one, finding solace in the few positives life offered him. His father's work ethic was instrumental, and Mitchell found himself earning pocket money from spraying cars in a plastic-screened trailer porch. His old man's mechanical affinity meant Mitchell was exposed to all elements of car maintenance and modification from an early age, and it's this that informed the direction of his life.

"I began building and modifying scale-model cars, and turned my tiny room into what would now be considered a giant diorama," he recalls. "I had a vision for each build, but would often leave these cars in primer on scaled-down jack stands, because the process is what I valued most. Enjoying a finished build is incredible, but for me the true beauty is in the journey and I realise now why I found it difficult to pass that phase in my early years.

"With a difficult family situation, these toys became my reality and developed into an obsession where model cars would turn into 200-hour therapeutic builds – using watch gears to fabricate functioning windows and rag tops, scratch-built door jambs, hinges and locking mechanisms, genuine leather upholstered seats, gold-plated suspension parts, fully functioning scale hydraulic systems, and anything else that would take me away from reality. I still build these cars today and enjoy them as much as I do the real cars. They remind me where I came from."

“Enjoying a finished build is incredible, but for me the true beauty is in the journey”

The Ferrari 328 you see spread across these pages, then, is no chequebook SEMA build. This is therapy and the achievement of a lifetime ambition. Button Snr was a man who would never take something that wasn't earned and never ask for something that wasn't deserved. So when Mitchell came home from school one day aged 14 to find him and all his belongings gone, he knew the fibre of the family had also taken flight. Our hero left home at 15, set to grafting in the auto industry. He bought himself a Mercedes 190E at 16 and kept striving onward and upward, buying and selling cars and making a name for himself in the automotive world. That advice about Ferraris reverberating in his brain. Enzo Ferrari became Mitchell's de facto role model.

"Enzo was the only person I idolised throughout my life, mostly because of the purity of his passion for motorsport and his creations," he explains. "Second to that was his ability to do so without allowing anyone else to influence his creativity in any way. I





was born in 1985, and not long after I uttered my first word, 'Ferrari', Enzo passed in 1988. With motorsport running through my veins, I developed an obsession over the following years with the Ferrari name and its history. I believe that legends never truly die, however their art often departs with them. So I chose 1988 as the designated year for my first Ferrari, and the 328 as the model, since it's the last purely analogue Ferrari."

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

Mitchell always watched the major auctions to keep an eye on prices. He wanted the cleanest 328 he could afford and after viewing a few cars his search led to a collector on the East Coast. This seller had an identical pair of 328 GTSs, hiding behind a single mahogany door, and for Mitchell it was love at first sight. "The car was completely original and meticulously maintained by a true enthusiast, who documented and saved every receipt since it





A MOMO flat-bottom Alcantara steering wheel to go with Bride Histrich carbon-fibre seats

left Maranello in 1988," he says. "He owned two, because he bought a matching car for his son, who sadly passed away leaving his father with his car as a memory of him, a memory he drove daily to honour his boy. I knew this 328 was special to him and that breathing new life into it would be my way of honouring the relationship they shared together with Ferrari. In short, I don't believe there was a cleaner 328 GTS in the country I could have begun with."

Mitchell assembled a tight cast of characters, each a trusted and talented friend, to aid him in fulfilling his vision – and the element that really leaps out at you from the finished build, as those genuine 288 GTO foglights stare you down, is the aggressive widebody aesthetic. Custom-crafted from carbon-Kevlar, the body conversion is respectful to Pininfarina's original lines, but no stone has been left unturned: the bespoke panels comprise the front wings, bumpers, bonnet, rear quarters, rocker panels, ducktail spoiler,



and even a one-off targa panel. It's all slathered in Ferrari Grigio Medio paint because that's what Enzo would have done. Although what's really got the Tifosi frothing is way the thing now sits.

Hidden under those custom curves is a scratch-built air-ride system. Mitchell is very rational about this: "A lot of people don't realise that the subframe and suspension are nearly half-a-foot beneath what appears to be the bottom of the vehicle, while on a modern car the bottom is just that – the bottom.

"With the 328, we have the option of a ride height comparable to a 4x4, enabling standard driving yet aesthetic sacrifices; air-ride with a proper racing strut enables us to retain the proper spring rate for driveability, yet the option to lift the car enough for proper performance without risk of failure, while being beautifully parked."

Makes sense. And did you get a load of those wheels? Developed in conjunction with Rotiform, the DNO was designed just for this car, based in the Dino's Cromodora wheels that few enthusiasts ever really liked; the expertise of Rotiform has turned that



Mitchell and his wife love driving around California's canyons



OWNER PROFILE:

Name: Mitchell Button

Age: 33

Occupation: Owner, Button Built

Inspiration for this project: Ferrari Enzo himself

So, you've built your dream car here? Sure have. That said, this build was a dream but it was not my goal. My goal was hidden among the reactions to the build and only revealed in the days following its debut.

And how do you feel about people's reactions? It's easy for someone who considers themselves a purist to ride the bandwagon and disregard the rationality of various aspects of this design. However, the difference between a true purist and one who believes they earn the title is experience. We can't speak upon things that we have no first-hand knowledge of.

Indeed. So how does it feel to finally see your own Ferrari in print?

Amazing – thank you and everyone involved for your interest in this build and for allowing me another outlet to share its story! I firmly believe that print media will always be the only true outlet to immortalise a build. And I'm happy that you guys will be the first print feature following our debut.

FERRARI 328 GTS



SACRI-LICIOUS

Some snobs reckon that Mitchell's ruined a Ferrari here, but that's an unfair analysis. He's no purist, sure. But he's a proud and fastidious historian. "While I deviated from Ferrari's original design, I remained true to the real spirit of Maranello in each detail of the build," he assures us. "The paint is an original Ferrari colour that I first saw on a 275 GTB. While the seats are reminiscent of the styling found on the 288 GTO – only with no headrest, to allow visibility through the rear window. The original Dino Cromodora wheels were my inspiration when I teamed up with Rotiform to create the DNO; I wanted to amplify the Dino-style face by adding three-piece construction with a 330 P3-type step lip. The Matte Death Bronze finish was inspired by the race-battered magnesium wheels of the 330 P3!

"The air-ride was engineered to be both functional and aesthetic, to properly enjoy the car for what it was meant for – driving. While the lines of the 458 GT3 mirrors are very modern, they mesh well with the curvature of the body, which makes them appear period-correct. And the exhaust and headers were inspired by the 308 GTB rally cars and the race cars of the '80s that inspired many of us to be the compulsive creators we are today. And powdercoating engine parts, badges and interior parts to match the wheels was important to keep a consistency." You see, while some may view this car as an act of vandalism, it's actually been carried out with the utmost care and respect.



"A Ferrari becomes more beautiful as its rpm climbs"



ugly duckling into a glorious swan – and there's even a matching spare wheel built to the same size as the original spare! The theme throughout the project has been one of high-end restomodding. Mitchell's paid close attention to what Singer have been up to with their Reimagined 911s. And that's precisely the effect he wanted – something that respects the car's heritage but moves it into the modern era. With flawless attention to detail, and around 400bhp, thanks to ITBs and some clever management, we'd say Button Built has ticked that box with gusto.

Mitchell is philosophical about the scale of his achievement, in the wake of a phenomenal worldwide reaction to the BB328's SEMA debut. "We live in Los Angeles and since California is blessed with beautiful canyons we take advantage to stretch the car's legs," he smiles. "A Ferrari becomes more beautiful as its rpm climbs, so we feel most grateful when we experience its true potential. Apart from the music it creates carving canyons, the aesthetic is extremely humbling, and we love parking outside our favourite Beverly Hills breweries and enjoying a pint as we remind ourselves how fortunate we are to take part in such a beautiful history.

"I spent a lot of time in hospitals as a child," he continues. "Some of that time was spent wondering when the next trip would be – so you could say cars have been, and always will be, a form of life support for me: a reason to fight, a reason to grow. And I think there's a beautiful appropriateness in driving a vehicle in honour of its late creator, while feeling it come alive. It leaves me feeling like I'm keeping Enzo's legacy alive with every shift."

That sums up the Button Built 328 perfectly. This was never about Insta-fame. This car is therapy, and karma, and just reward for hard work and passion. Mitchell isn't your typical Ferrari driver. But he's just the sort of driver Enzo would have respected. ■

TECH SPEC: FERRARI 328 GTS

STYLING

Grigio Medio paint; custom carbon-Kevlar widebody conversion – including front wings, front bumper, bonnet, rear bumper, rear quarter panels, rocker panels, targa top and ducktail spoiler; genuine 288 GTO foglamps; genuine 458 GT3 carbon fibre mirrors; custom two-piece aluminium diffuser with hidden hardware; original badges and emblems powdercoated to match wheels.

TUNING

F105CB 3.2-litre V8; Bosch K-Jetronic electronic fuel injection; custom stainless exhaust manifolds; custom straight-through exhaust system with upswept megaphone tails; Jenvey IDF individual throttle bodies on Weber IDF manifold; Electromotive ECU; 400bhp @9,200rpm; gated manual transmission.

CHASSIS

Custom 9.5x17in (front) and 12.5x18in (rear) Rotiform DNO wheels in Matte Death Bronze with satin black hardware (and matching 3-piece spare wheel built to dimensions of original spare); 235/40 (f) and 295/30 (r) Toyo R888R tyres; custom air-ride system with fully adjustable tubular A-arms and control arms; custom reinforced subframe; JRZ struts; Endo-CVT tank and AccuAir e-Level management; Wilwood lightweight racing big brake conversion with 2-piece floating discs.

INTERIOR

Bride Histris carbon-fibre seats; MOMO flat-bottom Alcantara steering wheel; killswitch and extinguisher.

THANKS

"First and foremost I thank my wife for providing purpose and validation to my obsession with motorsport, but more so for inspiring me to become a man that I am proud of. Experiencing machines such as this Ferrari is an incredible gift, but one that would be worthless without someone to share the moments they create. Sponsorships can often be impersonal, so I chose to limit companies I involve myself with for this build to those I considered to be true friends prior to planning this build, companies comprised of people I'm proud to be associated with and for this, I thank Toyo Tires and Rotiform for their support and for fortifying relationships that will remain as pillars in my journey through the world of motorsport. Goals provide hope, and for a young man with no family or direction in life I thank Ferrari; the goals that fuelled my journey from rags to 'Rarri were provided by Enzo."



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your passion**



TOP 10 CARS FOR THE BRAVE

The Ford Fiesta ST is one of our favourite cars. In many ways it's the archetypal hot hatch – it does all the things a hatchback should do, like being practical for the shopping and not using too much fuel and so on, as well as being hilariously fast and having a chassis honed by the gods themselves.

The newly launched Mk8 is already proving itself to be a winner, following in the footsteps of the perennially popular Mk7, which won pretty much every car of the year award going. If you buy one of those, you're guaranteed to have a good time.

But maybe life's too short for guarantees? Maybe you're the type of person who likes to roll the dice? Sure, a new Fiesta ST will come

with bulletproof reliability, a warranty, and a decent resale value, but how boring is that? No one lies on their death-bed thinking, 'I'm glad I spent all my money on a Fiesta'. We've had another idea. Why not take the £20,000-ish that the baby Ford costs, and instead spend it on something a bit more hedonistic?

It could all end in tears. But history is written by the winners and no one changes things by following the easy path. Buy a cheap Ferrari and smile as it burns to the ground.

Here are our top 10 cars for the brave – those who aren't afraid of sudden engine fires or catastrophic mechanical failure, the people who live in the now in case tomorrow never comes. Life is short...



TVR Tuscan ▲

TVRs have always been a bit flaky. That's the whole point. OK, the new Griffith looks set to be modern and reliable and built properly, but we're sort of hoping it'll be heinously unreliable because that's what TVRs are all about. In the 1970s they all smelt of industrial adhesive, in the '80s they just didn't work at all, and in the '90s and through to the new millennium it was as if these cars actually wanted to hurt their drivers. But when they're working...

Oh man, are they magnificent. If you're feeling brave, we'd urge you to consider the Tuscan.

We drove a hot-to-trot Tuscan S last year and had to be given a safety briefing beforehand ('No more than 2,500rpm until the oil temperature reaches 60°C; if the water temperature hits 100°C, pull over and switch it off; if the electrics lock you out of the car, unscrew the numberplate light to find the emergency boot release; if you

get locked inside the car, there's an ejector lever under the dash'), and frankly we were really nervous it was going to explode. But holy cow, it was quick: 0-62mph in under four seconds. And no nannyng electronics of any kind. Just a demented muscle car leaving number 11s all over the countryside.

It's an aching beautiful car too. Yes, it'll definitely break at some point, but you'll have a great time looking at it while you wait for the AA man.

TOP 10 CARS FOR THE BRAVE

Ferrari Mondial ►

It is actually possible to buy a real, actual Ferrari for Fiesta money. Although you'll have to be quick as the market is catching on. There was a time when marque aficionados viewed the 1980s Mondial with suspicion, a sort of 'Ew, why would you buy that one?' attitude. Which explains why they're so much more affordable than other Ferraris. To be fair, it's arguably not pretty in the traditional sense. But right now the question is: why wouldn't you buy one?

Prices of Mondials start around £25k at the moment, so that's about the same as a shiny new Fiesta ST plus a few bolt-on mods. And the Mondial offers a lot of the benefits of the Fiesta too. Sure, it's mid-engined, but somehow it also has back seats so you can get your mates or your kids in there. It's not too huge, so it's an equally good city car.

Er, OK, we've run out of rational reasons, so consider the irrational ones: it's got a proper alloy V8 with a flat-plane crank so it howls like a banshee; it was designed by Pininfarina and built by Scaglietti; and... well, come on, it's a Ferrari! That's the only reason you really need.



◄ Porsche 928

People say the 911 is a widowmaker, but it's the 928 that's driven by truly brave people. The thing's designed to break. The complex electronics are so absurdly convoluted that there's always going to be something going wrong. Suddenly all the dash lights will come on at once. You'll pull over and nothing will be wrong. Half a mile down the road, the washer jets will decide to empty the tank. And one of the headlights will pop open. And the passenger seat will recline itself. It's like driving a clown car. But as clown cars go, it's pretty bloody impressive.

The late-model GT and GTS is out of budget here, but your new-Fiesta money will buy you a late-1980s S4, which has a 5.0-litre V8 and 316bhp. Or if you're feeling really brave, pick up the earlier 4.7-litre ones for well under £10k, which will leave plenty of money in the kitty to fix it when it breaks. Which it will.

When it's working though, you'll have the time of your life. The chassis is fabulous, the interior comfortable enough to leap across continents in a single bound, and that V8 has a lot of heart. Will a 928 actually get you to your destination? Who knows? But it'll be a lot of fun finding out.

DeLorean DMC-12 ►

We've got a lot of love for the DeLorean. It could be the iconic Back to the Future films, it could be the bizarre story of the roguish John DeLorean, or perhaps it's just the way it looks. Actually, that's it. Gullwing doors, bare aluminium bodywork, taillights that look like retro Nike trainers, Lotus-like profile. We're as much in love with the looks as the concept. And that's just as well, because frankly, they're a bit crap.

Maybe that's unfair, but they're certainly not as good as they deserve to be. The car was originally intended to have a Wankel rotary engine, although the accountants got a bit scared about rotor seal warranty claims and the DeLorean got the PRV V6, an engine which was also fitted to the Talbot Tagora and the Renault Espace. They also neglected to put a big enough alternator on it, so if you turned the lights on at the same time as the radio, the battery would die.

Still, it's one of the most beautiful cars ever built. We guess the real bravery of DeLorean ownership is whether you can withstand an endless stream of jokes about whether it can do 88mph, or if you've been travelling back to the fifties to feel up your mother? Because this will happen to you every single day.



Lotus Esprit Turbo ►

A lot of boring old farts at car shows will gleefully tell you that Lotus stands for 'Lots Of Trouble, Usually Serious', patting themselves on the back as if they're the first person to have thought of this. The most annoying thing is that they're sort of right. It doesn't apply to all models, like the Elise (those same bores will make quips about K-Series head gasket failure – ignore them), or anything modern that wears the badge. But it's an unfortunate fact that older Loti can be a bit hit and miss. But much like TVRs, this is all part of the fun!

More often than not, you'll find that car enthusiasts have some manner of Esprit on their lottery wishlist, because it's such an all-time classic: the S1 and S2 have that desirable 007 chic, the S3 was available with 'TURBO' written on it in massive letters, and the X180 is the one we're steering you towards today. This is the model built between 1987-93, carrying all of the archaic architecture underneath but wearing a slippery new body to fit in with the dynamism of the go-go '90s.

The 2.2-litre turbocharged twin-cam hustles this gorgeous little thing to 62mph in a whisper over five seconds (or more like 4.5 in the post-1989 cars). And the poise of the chassis is just lovely. OK, the gearbox is fragile and temperamental and it might explode. But, hey, maybe it won't?



◀ Maserati Biturbo

This is one of the most confusing cars ever sold. Built between 1981-94, it had a huge number of inexplicably different names – we can't think of a car that's harder to search for used examples of. Initially sold as the Biturbo, it variously became the 222, 2.24v, Racing, 420, 425, 430, 422, 4.24v, 4.18v, 228... Plus there were all the spec variants, and Spyder versions, and the slightly shorter Karif – all essentially the same car.

They're fun though. This was the first ever production car to have twin turbos, which boosted a deep-lunged 2.0-litre V6. Our particular favourite is the Racing of 1991, which wasn't a race car at all, but was in fact a road car with adjustable Konis and a Quaife LSD, along with forged pistons and bigger turbos and 283bhp. But whichever of the many, many variants of Biturbo you choose, they're all very good.

Well, very good for the five percent of the time they're working. These are unreliable cars. Anything and everything can go wrong and costs a fortune to fix. And then there's the woes of crumbling Italian steel, but we don't need to concern ourselves with any of that. Saying you drive a twin-turbo Maserati is one of the coolest pub boasts there is. (Even if you had to get a lift to the pub, because it's broken, again.)



BMW 850ci ►

It's cool to tell people you drive an 8-Series, given the new one is a very sought-after thing. But the original 8er from the 1990s? That's where the smart money is. Possibly.

Or possibly not. Everyone we know who's owned one sucks air through their teeth when you ask if they'd recommend it. Every owner has a story about something that's broken and cost an arm and a leg to fix, and no two owners will be talking about the same failure. The 8-Series loves to surprise you.

But we all like surprises, right? And the E31 8-Series has a lot going for it: BMW spent \$1bn developing it and it's jam-packed with clever technology, as well as having a super-low drag coefficient and swish pillarless styling. It was the first road car to have a V12 engine mated to a 6-speed manual gearbox. Yes, the 840ci was available with a 4.0-litre V8, but there's no point messing about, is there? If you're going to dive into this dark hole, you might as well do it properly. The 850ci is the one you want, with the full-fat 5.0-litre V12.



TOP 10 CARS FOR THE BRAVE

Aston Martin DB7 ►

The DB7 is achingly beautiful. Anyone with eyes can see that. But why are they so (relatively) cheap compared to other sports cars and GTs of similar vintage? Perhaps it's because underneath that gorgeous façade, there's a whole lot of Jaguar XJ-S, a car which originally launched over 20 years before the DB7.

Nevertheless, it's a real modern-era Aston Martin you can buy for around £25k, and that can only be a good thing: it bears such bounteous treasure as a supercharged straight-six (or creamy-smooth V12 if you can stretch to the Vantage model), handling honed by TWR, and the unparalleled boasting power of telling people you drive an Aston.

All right, it'll cost a fortune to run, none of the parts are cheap, the brakes will probably bind, there'll be clonks from the suspension, the dials are in a silly place so you can't see them past the steering wheel, the back seats are unusable, the clutch is crap, the cooling system's weak, the body's prone to rust, the air-con will break and the coil packs will fail... But one day you'll pull up alongside that new Fiesta you nearly bought, and you'll see the shape of your DB7 reflected in the side of it, and the smile will split your face in two.



◀ Lancia Thema 8.32

The Lancia Thema, when launched in 1985, was a study in bemusement. The forgettable silhouette, questionable reliability and harsh interior plastics added up to every petrolhead's disappointment: a car designed to go reasonably cheaply from A to B, and nothing else. That Pininfarina designed it and were happy to put their name to it was jarring, as was Lancia's positioning of the Thema as a luxury car. People were baffled. Weren't Lancia the chaps who made beautiful swooping coupes and cheeky saloons with fizzy, rev-hungry engines?

Thankfully, Lancia is an Italian manufacturer. So they're extremely passionate. And secondly, they're totally unable to leave an idea alone. With the Thema there was a void-like sensation, a feeling that a spark was missing. Nobody, however, anticipated what happened next: they bolted in the engine from the Ferrari 308 QV to create the Thema 8.32.

Of course, throwing a Ferrari motor into an unassuming saloon leads to a lot of problem-solving; the gearbox, suspension and brakes all had to be substantially altered, and Ferrari themselves lacked the space at Maranello to assemble the engines, so the job was handed to Ducati. The 8.32 wore no Ferrari badges aside from a small stamp on the inlet manifold reading 'Lancia by Ferrari'. And it wasn't a sales success – only 3,537 were built, with just nine being officially sold in the UK.

But to those in the know, this is something very special indeed. If you can find one for sale, your Fiesta budget will buy you a car that rusts like a Lancia and drinks like a Ferrari. But the nerdy respect will be off the charts.



Rolls-Royce Corniche ►

There's a reason billionaires are always seen chauffeured around in Rolls-Royces. They are, by most measurable and logical standards, the best cars in the world. That's why they cost so much. They're fast and powerful, near-silent and opulently appointed, with supreme care of craft and attention to detail.

However, everything begins to break down eventually and old Rolls-Royces aren't always as solid and trustworthy as new ones, so they become affordable. We're eyeing up the Corniche – not the 2000s Volkswagen-era one, but the caddish two-door built from 1971 right up to '95. It was based on the Silver Shadow, the model most people picture when they think of a Rolls-Royce. The Corniche, however, was infinitely more stylish by virtue of being a two-door coupé – or convertible, if you're a bit flash.

Infinite swank, V8 urge, effortless style. Corniche prices range from £15,000 to £130,000, but it's thrilling to live dangerously, is it not? Sure, there are pitfalls: the Citroën-licensed hydropneumatics control pretty much everything, so if your clever self-levelling suspension system starts leaking you'll also lose the brakes. If you buy a pre-1980 Corniche that predates fuel-injection, the carbs will always be going out of balance. If someone bumps into it, you won't be able to find new panels in the local scrappie. And when things break, they'll be Rolls-Royce money to fix.

But forget all that. Because you'll be driving around in a Rolls-Royce. Just like those billionaires off the telly.

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HOT RIDE



Words: Sam Preston Photography: Dan Pullen

ANOTHER DIMENSION

Going above and beyond in his quest for the ultimate show car, Neil Montgomery's Golf GTI is even rocking custom 3D-printed parts to ensure it now stands out for all the right reasons...

Unless you're one of the very few out there lucky enough to be able to shell out for a brand new, lime-green McLaren, it can be much trickier than it might seem to really set yourself apart on the scene with your four-wheeled companion of choice.

Sure, the beautiful world of aftermarket upgrades this fine publication revolves around certainly opens up plenty of options to make your motor that little bit more unique and personal to your tastes. But chances are you'll see at least one other car at the next show you go to that's boasting some similar modifications to yours, especially if you go for off-the-shelf parts.

Thankfully though, there is a solution to the problem, as we've just been so beautifully reminded after spending some time with electrical engineer Neil here and his next-level Mk5 Golf.

His secret to creating something that provides so much more of an impact than most? Plenty of blood, sweat and tears – and the willingness to create entire parts from scratch where necessary to fulfil his vision. Because, as we're about to find out, being awesome doesn't come easily...

PLAYING GOLF

"Personally, I think the Mk5 is the best-looking Golf," says Eastbourne-based Neil. He was soon on the hunt for an GTI-badged example of this celebrated mid-noughties hatch after owning a string of SEATs that sold him on VAG-group cars and their infamously impressive build quality.

There were a few caveats thrown in as he began to trawl eBay, however: one revolving around some torn ligaments in his knee from landing at a dodgy angle at work a few years back, meaning an automatic car





Classy touches reflect
Neil's eye for detail



➔ would be the most suitable option, and the other being one all of us can relate to in the form of a fairly limited budget. "I loved the look of the Edition 30-spec cars, but couldn't find one in my price range. So I decided to look at this DSG-equipped GTI instead," he recalls.

Before going to view this seemingly tidy Reflex Silver model, though, another hurdle soon sprung up, this time in the form of one of his children dropping a bowling ball on their foot, leaving Neil house-bound for the next couple of days. "The owner kindly offered to drive down to my house so I could look at it. He said he could do with a drive and wasn't bothered about whether I committed to buying it or not," he continues, clearly stumbling on another genuine car fella. "It was super-clean, so we did a deal. I'd like to once again thank him for his kind gesture if he's reading this!"

With a sumptuous three-door slice of VW's 200bhp hot hatch now on his hands, plans were soon afoot to get this very modify-able machine tailored slightly closer to Neil's needs, in the form of some light fettling here and there. It's how some 19-inch Bentley rims soon found their way onto the car, swiftly followed by some 25mm lowering springs that ensured a much nicer ride height was offered up.

Things were initially meant to end there, but we think you can probably already tell that was only just the start of the story...

AIRING HIS THOUGHTS

"I've always wanted to have a good go at building a proper show car, and installing air ride on one of my vehicles, and I had a conversation with my partner about it one day," Neil tells us – something that can often become a make-or-break moment in any car build. "She turned around and said 'If that's what you want, go for it'. Though I think she's regretted it since!"

Less than a week later, then, a range-topping Air Lift Performance kit was on its way to Neil's abode, with

a mental list of other parts slowly-but-surely taking shape in his head to complement the huge drop this new suspension setup would undoubtedly offer up. It began by Neil's partner very kindly driving the pair from the bottom of the UK all the way to the top – up to Scotland to pick up a set of 20-inch OZ Racing alloys that matched his exact requirements – Ultraleggera HLT jobbies in matte graphite that promised to look a million dollars up against the bright silver bodywork.

"I'm a firm believer that if you add big wheels, you need big brakes to match," Neil explains, his clinical attention-to-detail beginning to shine through even at this early stage. Cue some monstrously capable Audi TTRS and RS4 stoppers taking pride of place both front and rear respectively, all finished up in VW's Tornado Red colour that would play a massive part in the styling elsewhere down the line.

With his fave show – Edition 38 – only weeks away, Neil ramped things up a notch at this stage, snapping

“I’m a firm believer that if you add big wheels, then you need to add big brakes to match”



Includes a K04 'charger
and a Forge intercooler

SHOW CAR, WITH CLOUT

We might've mainly focused on the show-friendly parts this car offers, but don't for one second think Neil's hatchback is all show, no go.

He's treated his tunable 2.0 TFSI motor to some seriously comprehensive upgrades along the line, like a larger K04 'charger from an Edition 30, as well as a Forge intercooler and a seriously overhauled fuelling system to hit that headline figure of 357bhp – enough to keep anyone happy! "It's got nearly 100k under its belt now, but it never misses a beat and still pulls like a train!" he tells us with a knowing grin.



HOT RIDE

➔ up an Edition 30 interior and forming a carbon fibre addiction after discovering the process of carbon skinning – something he applied to a large number of interior panels to great success. With plenty of love for his quickly forming beauty to be received at this Dub event, it also spurred him on to keep the momentum going upon his return.

“Paul from C6 Carbon took over the carbon fibre duties, while Gary from GDF Steelworks whipped up a half roll-cage I’d designed on my computer,” Neil modestly reveals, with plenty more of the lightweight weaved material finding its way into the cabin in the form of bespoke parts. And the ‘cage’ itself being finished off in none other than that bright Tornado Red hue, of course.

It’s at this stage where Neil’s out-and-out dedication to ensure his pride and joy was like nothing anyone had ever seen before really began to shine through, though. “I wanted to add some sounds into the car, so decided to build my own sub-woofer box,” he explains. “It was around the time I had an operation to remove a metal plate from my leg, which left me sofa-bound for three months.”

While many would use this time for rest and recovery, Neil could be found finishing up the boot install from his sofa, leaving him with the mother of all Kenwood installs that not only sports a killer ICE setup, but also



The steering wheel has C6 Carbon carbon fibre finish and Lavish Automotive Alcantara re-trim

a sumptuous air display, complete with carbon fibre tanks and all the trimmings.

3D PRINTING

Still not happy to settle, a relatively new technique of parts production soon entered Neil’s life, not only changing his car but his career path for the better. “I started 3D printing parts that I couldn’t buy, which

OWNER PROFILE:

Owner: Neil Montgomery

Age: 38

Occupation: Owner of @be-spokedcustoms

Favourite mod: 3D printed valve covers





MK5 GOLF



proved such a success that I started to sell them within my newly formed company, Bespoked Customs." As well as custom door and bonnet stays, the Golf now rocks a raft of other one-off touches, such as the seat adjusters and air tank valve covers – certainly not lengths you'll see every owner going to with their car, that's for sure!

Neil's story reminds us that, if you really want to do things differently from the rest, you better make



Neil designed the rollcage himself



Neil describes his car
as 'OEM retro plus'



sure you've got the minerals to dive head-first into the unknown, keeping faith regardless of what life throws your way. It might sound daunting, but it only takes one look at this Mk5 to prove that it's always worth taking the more challenging route in life.

"My partner asked me the other day what style I thought my car has ended up like," says Neil. "And I describe it as OEM retro plus" – a fitting phrase for what's on offer here.

Keen to ensure parts like his air suspension drove to at least the same high standards as the factory components, as well as now housing a healthy 357bhp motor, it ain't no show pony, often getting a good blasting on his local Sussex country roads. Because if you've created something this special, the last thing you want to do is lock it away all the time... ■



TECH SPEC: MK5 GOLF GTI

Styling

Reflex Silver body; SRS Tec 25mm widened front wings with modified inner arch liners; EM Tuning modified headlights (featuring Morimoto bi-xenon bulbs, Reflex Silver LED Shrouds and frosted indicators, all de-chromed with laser-etched projector lenses); custom LED R32-spec rear lights (with clear lenses, de-chromed with Satin Black details and Skyline inner tailgate lights); OSIR carbon-fibre front grille, rear DTM-style diffuser, Telson rear spoiler and B-pillar panels; LED lights in outer door handles; custom carbon-fibre tailgate and bonnet struts with 3D-printed end caps.

Tuning

2.0-litre TFSI turbocharged four-cylinder engine; K04 turbocharger upgrade; custom induction kit with enlarged Pipercross cone filter; Forge Motorsport front-mount intercooler; Forge Motorsport diverter valve; Audi RS3 fuel injectors; Audi RS4 fuel rail pressure valve; 136bar uprated high-pressure fuel pump; 200bar fuel rail pressure sensor; 3bar MAP sensor; Audi R8 coil packs; iridium spark plugs; Creation Motorsport PCV delete; full turbo-back BCS Powervalue exhaust system with black ceramic coated twin oval tips; R-Tech ECU re-map.

Transmission

Six-speed DSG semi-auto dual-clutch gearbox.

Chassis

8.5x20in OZ Racing Ultraleggera HLT alloy wheels in matte graphite; WheelWorx custom centre-lock caps; Air Lift Performance air suspension system (with Performance front struts, double bellow rear bags, Slam XL rear shocks and 3P management); Hardrace rear camber kit; Audi R8 eight-pot callipers with 370mm Audi TTRS (f); Audi R8 four-pot callipers with 365mm discs and separate handbrake callipers (r).

Interior

Mercedes A45 AMG Recaro front seats in red/black leather with black Alcantara centres and red stitching; 3D-printed adjuster inserts; C6 Carbon full interior dash kit (comprising centre dash, dash end covers, air vents, dash/door inserts and DSG gear surround); Mk6 Golf steering wheel with C6 Carbon carbon fibre finish and Lavish Automotive Alcantara re-trim with red stitching; custom S2T gloss red DSG paddles; all gloss chrome trim replaced with gloss black/red highlights; black Alcantara-trimmed interior components (including sun visors, arm rest, gear gaiter, handbrake cover, roof lining and door car inserts); DPM Auto Body gloss black components (including door tops, dashboard, centre cubby and arm rest); GDF Steelworks rear rollcage; full boot install (comprising custom seat delete with anthracite carpet; twin carbon air tanks, LED-illuminated Alcantara frame with satin black hardlines and 3D-printed valve covers); Kenwood DNX518VDABS GPS navigation system head unit; full Bespoked Customs audio boot build (comprising Kenwood DRV-N520 dashcam, Kenwood KFC-WPS1200F 12in sub-woofer, Kenwood KFC-S6976EX 6x9 speakers, Kenwood KFC-XR18009 two-way speakers, Kenwood X501-1 sub-woofer amplifier and twin Kenwood X301-4 speaker amplifiers).

Thanks

I'd like to say thank you to all my friends and family for pushing me to do the build and come up with new ideas; also Dave at DPM Autobody, Gary at GDF Steelworks and Paul at C6 Carbon. But mainly my partner, Bex, for putting up with the late nights and the support she has given me to make my dreams come true. Insta links: @ne05lll / @bespokedcustoms

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Gunmetal/Polished

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8"x18", 8.5"x19"
8.5"x20"



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Gloss Black, Bronze

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8.5"x20"



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CERTIFICATION ON
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8"x19", 8.5"x20"
9"x20", 9.5"x21"



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6.5"x16", 7"x16",
7"x17", 7.5"x17",
7.5"x18", 8"x18",
8"x19"



LUCCA

Polar Silver, Diamond
Black, Diamond Black/
Polished

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7.5"x17", 8"x18",
8"x19", 8"x20"



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FRESH KIT

AIRRIDE GOLD KITS, From £1800



The boys at AirRide in sunny Norwich have been around for 20-odd years now and are famous all around the world for supplying (and often fitting) a simply staggering range of off-the-shelf kits, sourced from every popular brand, for just about every motor you can imagine. They've also been known to build the odd mag feature, along with a host of hero cars for films and TV shows.

Still, all that probably won't be news to you. But their brand-new Airride Gold Kits will be! That's right, they may have been rather busy working on bagging cars for the next *Fast And The Furious* movie of late. But all the messing about with Vin Diesel and chums hasn't

stopped them developing their very own product line while they were at it. And they're starting off by hitting the market with "just a few" of 'em. And by that they mean over 600 of the buggers!

What they've done here is simply taken all their years of knowledge and expertise, and ploughed it into their home-grown range of plug-and-play kits. It certainly shows too. These are not only some of the best quality items we've seen to date, but they've been specifically developed for easy, direct fitment without the need for any heavy fabrication.

They also offer up to 5-inches of drop, with top-notch performance handling and ride quality for just about any car you'll find here in the UK, everything from Minis to Maseratis in fact.

Top work we say. It's good to see that proper British engineering is still killing it! www.airride.co.uk



FRESH KIT

NEW PRODUCTS

The shiniest and freshest mods on the market

DEATSCHWERKS BMW 1800CC INJECTORS, £1350

It has been said that modern Beemers are some of the easiest cars to tune to mental power with relatively simple mods. And you know what? We reckon that observation is pretty much spot on.

One of the biggest problems with any engine tuning though, is when software reaches the limit of getting enough fuel to compensate for a major hike in airflow. That's when hardware has to step in, and the reason why you'll already find a shed load of larger aftermarket injectors on the market.

That said, there's big and there's BIG... and then there's these 1800cc bastards that are absolutely enormous, well over double the size of the originals. That's an almost unbelievable amount of fuel to dump in when you think about it, you might as well just stick the petrol-pump straight in there and be done with it!

It goes without saying that these are for insane applications only, but they're currently available for the S55 lump you'll find in the M3 and M4. But what's most important is that they haven't skimped on the build quality or features, these still use the OE spray pattern and are also E85 compatible, which we have no doubt that they need to be at this level.

www.deatschwerks.com



KITVISION OBSERVER 720P DASH CAM, £50

If, in the event of an accident, you want to stop the other bloke doing his finest Shaggy impression (It wasn't me? I got it – Jules), a dash cam is something of an essential nowadays. That said, many of these items can give your credit card a right old battering, so it's good to see Kitvision bucking the trend by offering a top-quality item for just 50-quid!

Now obviously, for that money, it's already a no brainer. But that goes double when you find out that it's packed with all the features you want, stuff like Auto-Start, G-sensor collision detection, motion detection and a proper parking mode, but without any of the silly bits and pieces that inevitably push the price up. In that way, it's a basic bit of kit, that's not all that basic at all. We just can't argue with that concept.

www.kitvision.co.uk



DPW REMOTE EXHAUST CUTOUT, £270

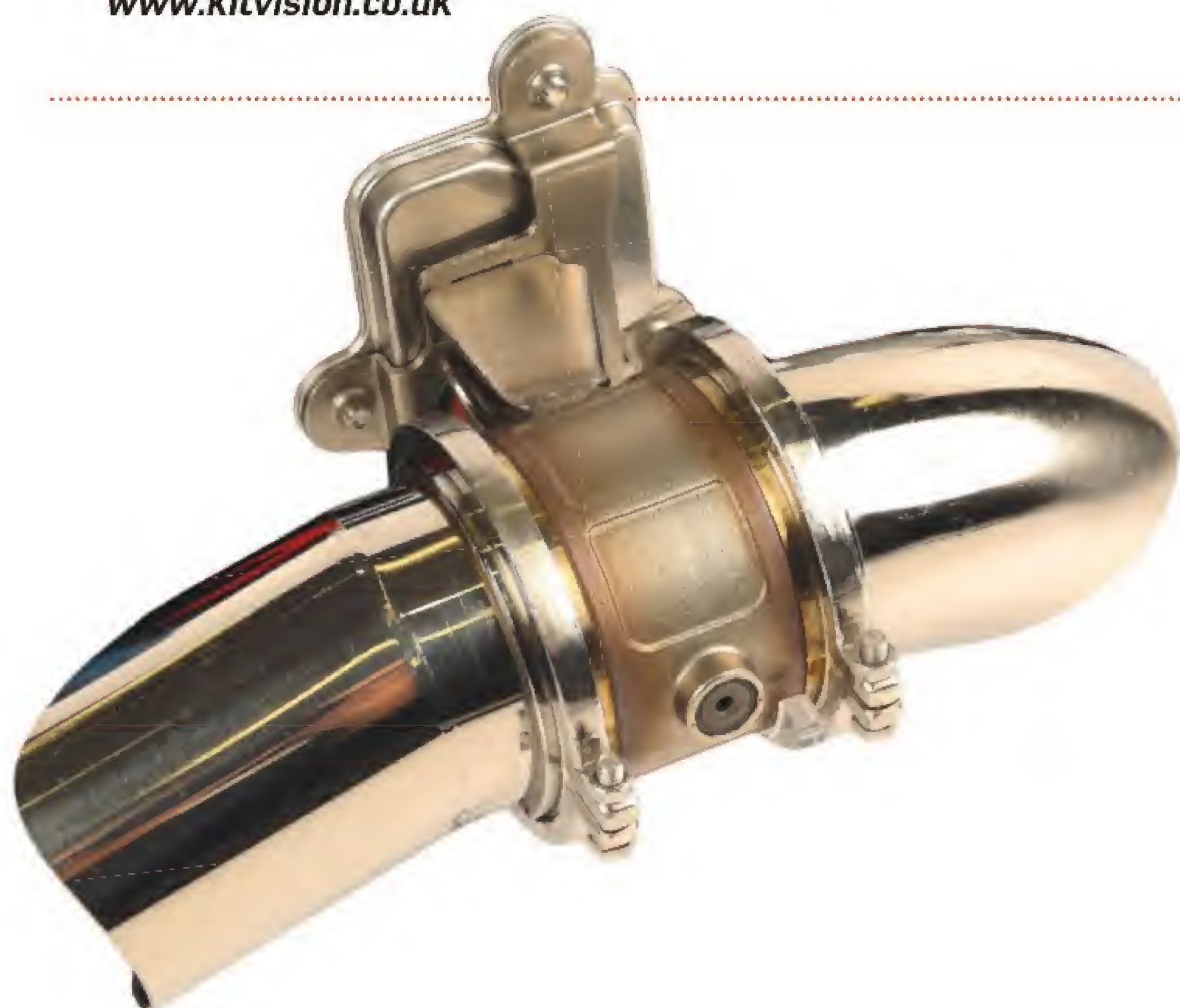
Having a massive noisy exhaust may be the best for two things, namely getting the maximum gas flow out of your engine for more power, and proving who's got the biggest spuds when flooring it past the local cop shop. But, in a normal driving situation at least, many big bores tend to equal many headaches – the motorway drone is pretty much guaranteed to do your nut in for starters.

Still, that's where this neat little universal product comes in. The DPW Cutout is a device that can be welded into your system to control gas flow via a smartphone app or a remote control. The clever 360-deg rotational design allows easy installation on just about any system out there too.

This means you can cut the noise when you need some quiet time (roadside checks and MoTs spring to mind) and open up the system fully when you're ready to give it the berries.

It's not cheap of course, but then again, neither is the supercar you'll need to get one of these as standard. A top little gizmo.

www.digipowerusa.com



WOLFRACE LUCCA, FROM £100 (EACH)

Of all our home-grown British wheel brands, Wolfrace have to be one of the most famous and well-established. We don't have to tell you that these guys have been around for ages, and that they have one of the biggest ranges in the business!

This new Lucca, which is part of their infinitely popular Eurosport lineup, is one of their freshest rims to date. A slabby (is that the technical term Midge? – Initial G), split-spoke spider design, we reckon it's solidly stout, almost Germanic, in appearance. That's pretty apt though, because these are actually built in Germany to the most stringent TUV standards, they also come with a 5-year warranty.

Offering a finish for every taste, a whole range of usable sizes, and PCDs to cover the vast majority of core motors out there, these are bound to be one of the most celebrated bargain wheels of 2019. And rightly so.

www.wolfrace.com

- **Sizes:** 6.5x16, 6.5x17, 7.5x17, 8.0x18, 8.0x19
- **PCDs:** 4x100, 4x108, 4x98, 5x100, 5x108, 5x110, 5x112, 5x114.3, 5x115
- **Offset:** 20-52
- **Finishes:** Diamond Black/Polished, Diamond Black, Polar Silver

**ROTIFORM BKK, FROM £855 (EACH)**

What with the mentalist CVT last month, it looks like the US boys aren't resting on their laurels, because here's yet another absolute jaw-dropper! These Rotiform hoops seem to be just like London buses lately, you wait in anticipation for a while, and then bam! They all come along at once. Still, at least they're also available in red, eh?

Anyway, there's lots to drool over with this forged offering. For a start, the BKK here manages to look classy, but with a distinct hardcore motorsport (maybe even off-road) look at the same time. In fact, this monster has been here for all of 3-seconds and it's already one of our all-time favourites. Any size (more or less) and any fitment too. Epic!

www.rotiform.com

- **Sizes:** Any 14-24 diameter, any 6-16 width,
- **PCD:** All 5-stud
- **Offset:** Any
- **Finishes:** Any custom

PROJEX PX09, FROM £3495 (SET)

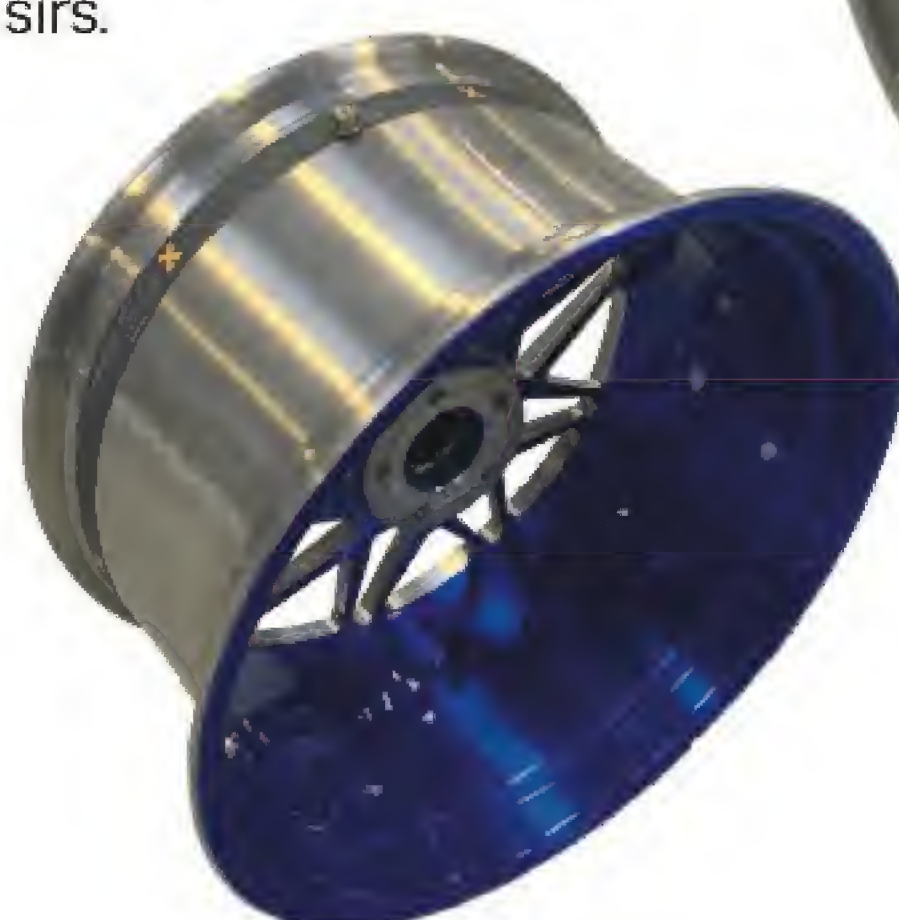
We spotted this awesome-looking, forged stunner at Autosport and, as it turns out, the beauty here isn't just skin deep. Far from being a one-off show special that you'll never be able to get your mitts on, these one-piece monoblocks are made right here in the UK, and available in just about any custom finish you can dream up.

Take this one as a rough example of what can be done. It has a machined face with a brushed titanium finish, a DDT (that's Double Dark Tint to us mere mortals), and even anodised barrels - talk about going all out, eh? That said, these guys love a challenge, so yours can be even madder. The only real limit here is your imagination.

We love the classic, flat-face, split-ten design and, for full-on forged hoops that are built specifically for your car, we can't help thinking they offer some seriously good value too. Well played sirs.

www.projexuk.com

- **Sizes:** Any 19-24 diameter, any 8-12 widths
- **PCD:** Any 5-stud
- **Offset:** 5-50
- **Finishes:** Any custom



FRESH KIT

AUDIO

Sound investments for your modified ride...

NORTHSTAR SMS BATTERIES, FROM £190

We love a spot of ultra-high-end SQ audio here at FC, but there's still a lot to be said for an old-fashioned SPL system designed to blow the bloody doors off. And for that at least, one of the biggest considerations is having plenty of juice to back it up. That's not to say of course, that there's anything old-fashioned about these rather brutal specialty batteries from legendary firm NorthStar USA. Quite the opposite in fact.

Basically speaking, there are two types of performance car battery; high-cranking starting batteries (for starting and running your car, obviously), and deep cycle units which have a huge reserve capacity for prolonged use in amp-sapping audio systems. What's great about these SMS items, is that the use of lead AGM (Absorbent Glass Matt) technology means they can actually do both.

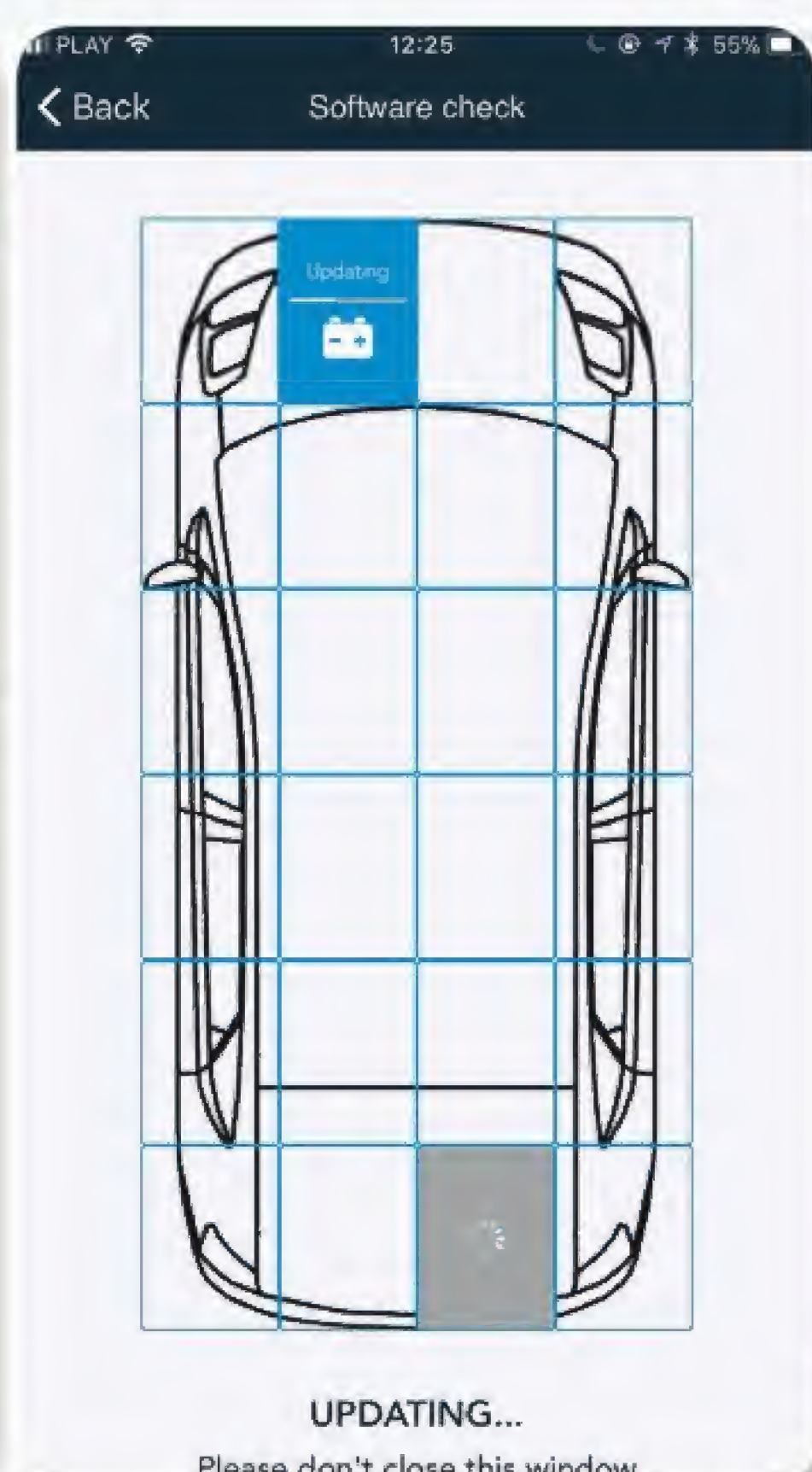
Where an average car battery will crank over around 4 or 500CCA (Cold Cranking Amps), some of these can put out a whopping 1420CCA! So, if you fancy dropping competition-ready bass burps on a monster 8-kilowatt system with a single battery, it's not gonna be a problem.

Plenty of world record-holding SPL cars are now packing these buggers and we'd imagine they'd be useful for running many a bonkers hydraulic suspension setup too. But the main point is that these monsters are not only hardcore, but they're as clever as you like. This stuff is exactly where NorthStar pushes the realms of technology and innovation.

What's perhaps the most mind-blowing thing of all, is that these SMS units all have built in Bluetooth, meaning you can keep an eye on their voltage and temperature on your smartphone via the new NorthStar Ace app. Mentalist bassheads and gadget freaks rejoice!

Get Yours

www.batterymegastore.co.uk



Looking for something a little more, er, normal?

OK, so we understand that not everyone needs a battery the size of a medium-sized pickup truck to run their audio system. The good news is that NorthStar have a solution for every other car out there too. Their top-of-the-line Elite range also starts at around 190 quid each. But these items are more conventional in size and shape for easy, direct fitment.

Most importantly though, these are also top-notch AGM units with the same minerals as their SMS cousins. They're able to crank over way more CCAs than standard car batteries and have plenty left over for running uprated audio systems, air compressors and anything else you could possibly plug in. Best of all too, they also use Bluetooth to make them compatible with the epic NorthStar Ace app. Love it!



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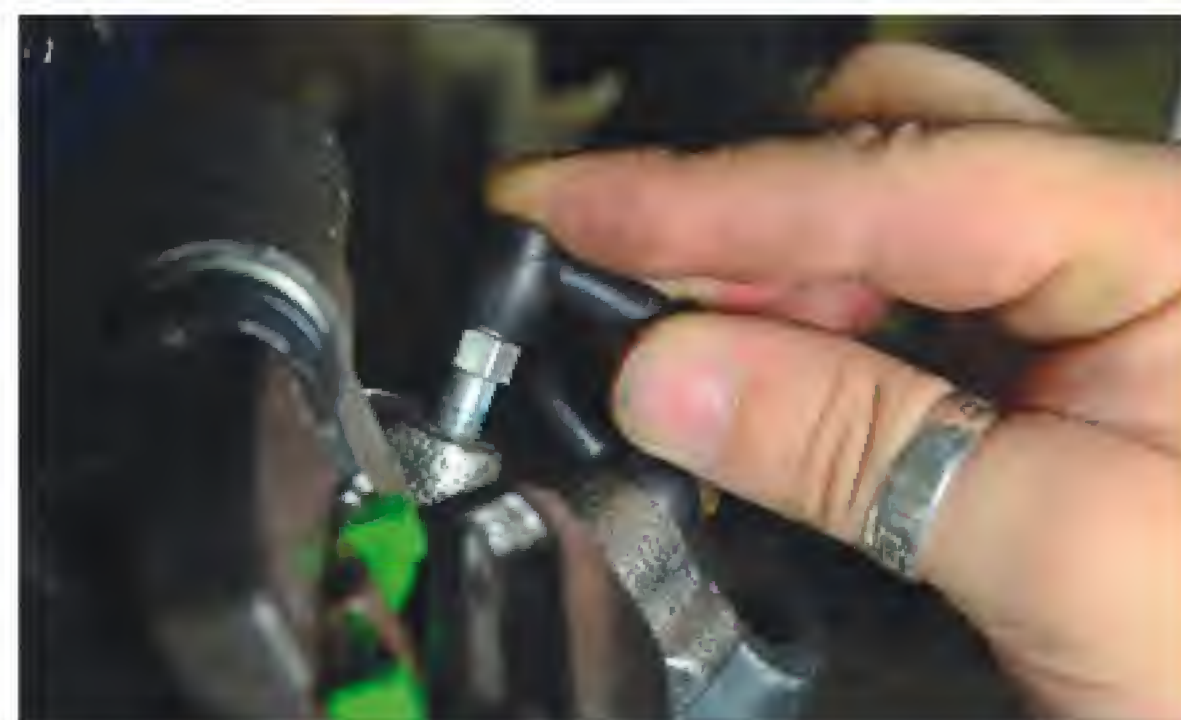
Price **£25.18** (list price)

www.silverlinetools.com

Upgraded brakes are one of the all-time great mods. But it pays to sort the basics first...

Brakes are good. We like brakes. Especially ones that work properly. Here at FC we're partial to the odd upgrade too, but the most important thing with having effective stoppers is always maintenance, and all too often the most critical bit, the fluid, is forgotten. Ask yourself, when was the last time you changed yours? Exactly. You can have all the upgrades in the world, but if your fluid has been running around the system for the last half-decade, you'll be wasting a fair amount of your time and money. Brake fluid is a hygroscopic liquid, which means it absorbs moisture from the air and this effectively lowers its boiling point, leading to a huge loss in performance.

Luckily though, changing the fluid (and the essential bleeding of the system) needn't be a scary process. It's also something you'll need to do when fitting new callipers or braided hoses. A tool like this, while not essential, will certainly help you along the way.



THE PRODUCT

Bleeding brakes can be a bugger at the best of times. Normally you'll need a load of clear tubing, an oil pan and a mate to jump up and down on the middle pedal until you get all the air bubbles out. It can be messy, smelly and, if you haven't got any mates (ah, that's why you use one of these – Jules), a right old pain!

What this sort of product does however, is make one-man bleeding a doddle. The pump simply creates a vacuum in the system, drawing out the fluid, and purging the system. It's simply a manual version of the air-powered items garages tend to use. They follow a universally known and universally respected method.

This Silverline kit is like many you can find on the market, except for three main points. First, the price is seriously low (you'll find it even cheaper than the list price at most dealers). Second, the unit is built to last. And finally, perhaps most importantly, it's from Silverline, a well-established brand that offers a comprehensive guarantee.

As for the actual kit, it comes with loads of piping and all the adaptors you'll need for bleeding, and for various other jobs. Our test wasn't a complicated one – bleed some new callipers that have just been fitted. But what was immediately apparent was that this item makes it stupidly easy. In fact, I reckon you just can't cock it up. And that's pretty crucial when it comes to brakes!



THE VERDICT

It's true that, unless you spend a lot of time on track boiling the shite out of the stuff, you only really change your brake fluid every couple of years. It's also true that, even the most prolific modder will only fit so many BBKs or braided brake lines. So, why do you need one of these in your life? Because it's so cheap and easy to use that it's almost silly to pay someone else to do the job. Not when this kit costs next to nothing and saves loads of time and effort.

“Costs next to nothing and saves loads of time and effort”

Yeah OK, it's a specialist tool. And even though it can be used for bleeding clutches and all sorts of vacuum testing on engines (which is infinitely useful for turbo car owners), you'll only have to break it out every so often. But then again, that's the whole point.

It fits a great niche in the market. It's not as hardcore or expensive as the professional garage kit that gets used every day, but that doesn't mean it couldn't be. If I'm honest, I'm used to Silverline kit, but this brass-bodied pump is much better quality than I thought it would be for the money. If you're a serious hands-on modder or DIYer, it could prove an essential item in your tool arsenal.

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Words: Midge Photography: Jules

FC FAVOURITES DETAILING KIT

There's top products, and then there's top products, but here's the ones we actually use ourselves...



Here at FC we review scores of different products throughout the year. The main two questions we get asked on a regular basis though, are; "what's the best?" and, "what do you actually use?"

Well, that got us thinking about what makes a great detailing product, an item so good that we're prepared to blow the cobwebs off our crusty wallets and break

out our own hard(ish)-earned cash.

The truth is a simple one though, it's a balance of performance, price and preference... with the last one being particularly important. In fact, when it comes down to it, maybe personal preference is all that really matters, right? This also means that, although we've gone all-out to show you some of the world's very

finest products here, there really is no right or wrong answer. You may agree with our FC Favourites, you may not, but don't ever forget that the world would be a boring place if we all agreed on everything! Why not hit us up on Facebook and tell us what you think? The real question is; what's your favourite? And, while you're having a good ol' think about it, here's ours...

Washing



Autoglym Active Insect Remover,
£8.50 (500ml)
"Super powerful, and good to use as a TFR too.
Whack some on before every contact wash."
www.autoglym.com



Auto Finesse Avalanche Snow Foam,
£12.95 (1-litre)
"We love the original, and we love all the limited
edition 'flavours' too."
www.autofinesse.co.uk



Soft99 Creamy Shampoo,
£12.99 (1-litre)
"This stuff is great for stripping waxes and sealants."
www.nipponshine.com



**Chipex Uber Super Concentrate
Shampoo**, £12.95 (500ml)
"Makes maintenance washes easy. Has a
ludicrous dilution ratio of 400:1!"
www.chipex.co.uk



Auto Finesse Aqua Coat,
£16.95 (1-litre)
"Midge's favourite detailing product of all time. Super
hydrophobic, super awesome!"
www.autofinesse.co.uk



Meguiar's Mirror Bright Polishing Wax, £23 (414ml)
"Old skool-looking but packed with modern tech. Gently polishes paint
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ValetPRO Purple Passion,
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Auto Finesse Caramics Paint Protection, £49.95 (paint kit)
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ValetPro Matte Protect, £12.99 (500ml)
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THE FC PORTFOLIO





Photography: Ronald Veth Car: BMW E30 Touring Owner: Sander Op't Root





Photography: Mike Kuhn Car: Ferrari 328 Owner: Mitchell Button

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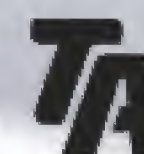
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HOT RIDE

This blisteringly green station wagon is just bristling with Oriental violence, fusing Asian malevolence with good old-fashioned European insanity...

"Whatcha gonna do with all that junk, all that junk inside your trunk?" We're not totally sure what the Black Eyed Peas were banging on about in the bafflingly cretinous My Humps song, but we can only assume they were addressing an acquaintance who'd been deeply entrenched in the painstaking task of clearing out the loft, sorting and pruning and expunging until the boot of their car was full of superfluous items from their past.

So the natural answer to give the Black Eyed Peas is: "Oh, I'm just off to the tip. Is that a box of glass to be recycled? Yeah, I can take that for you. No, I'm not taking your food waste bin, it reeks."

Unwarranted quizzing from average rappers aside, this kind of endeavour is all just part of life when you own an estate car. Well, unless you're Sander Op't Root, that is. He's the owner of this particular car, you see, and there are two important elements in his sphere of experience which exempt him from having annoying refuse-based badinage with terrible musicians. First of all, it's a BMW, which means it's not an estate – it's a Touring. And secondly... well, just look at the bloody thing. This is clearly not a man who bought an estate car so he could cart the lawn trimmings about or take advantage of the offers on home furnishings at Habitat.

LAD ON TOURING

So, as a seasoned car enthusiast at the tender age of 21, who's previously stanced a bunch of Golfs and restored a Mini, why did Sander buy himself a wagon? "The Touring was brought into my work by a



Words: Dan Bevis Photography: Ronald Veth

CROUCHING TIGER, VERDANT WAGON



HOT RIDE



➔ customer who was looking to get rid of it," he explains. (Sander's a mechanic by trade. Explains a few things.) "I took a look and liked what I saw, so I made an offer and a few days later it was accepted."

So there you go, simple as that. He could see the potential, and in the twinkling of an eye Sander was set up to get out there and reframe the local population's perceptions of who you could expect to see behind the wheel of a 3-Series estate. Well, not quite.

"The car wasn't running, I had to drag it out of there," he recalls. "It did start easily enough though, with a new battery and some fresh fluids. After a week of tinkering I had it running like clockwork – so the adventure could begin..."

It's immediately obvious that this is a man with vision. Someone who would rather create his own bow wave in the scene than bob and eddy in the turbulence of others. And inspiration for the first alteration came from his brother – or, more specifically, his brother's car, a bagged Passat. Sander coveted that air-ride, he wanted it for himself. This lust plunged him headfirst into the adventure he so yearned for right from the get-go, as air-ride is a), quite expensive to buy, and b), not readily available for the E30 Touring. So the only realistic option was to fabricate a bespoke system.

Thankfully, Sander relishes this kind of thing, like a mad scientist after a boozy lunch. "I first set about finding some

appropriate air-bags, and then sourced some valves I thought would work well," he says (slightly manically, but all the more endearing for it). "After a bit of fabrication I got it all installed and working properly, and the acid test was to get out and try to drive it as low as possible. Which was a mistake, as it turned out, as the bags then fouled the wheels and split open. Everything broke."

But this is all part of the fun, isn't it? Being a trailblazer isn't easy. Sander simply dialled a mate to tow him home, installed a new set of bags and this time fitted an electric valve regulator. Bit of trial and error, but it all turned out lovely in the end.

"I took it to a bunch of tuning events, but the car wasn't really getting the attention



OWNER PROFILE:

Name: Sander Op't Root

Age: 21

Occupation: Car mechanic

Hobbies: Cars!

Inspiration for this project: I saw a Pandem E30 coupe from America on Instagram and fell in love

Which part took the longest? The bodykit build, definitely

Favourite thing about your car: It's a Pandem Touring!

Any future plans? Sure: engine swap, brake upgrade, rollcage, new seats, doorcards... It goes on and on...

“Possibly the least sensible estate the world has ever seen”



Pandem widebody kit, custom green wrap and custom General Wheels rear spoiler

I thought it deserved, so I went back to drawing board,” Sander continues. “I locked myself away in the garage to begin the car’s metamorphosis... the idea was to be wide, really wide, but also to be beautiful. So a bodykit was needed.”

GOING FLAT OUT

As it turned out, it wasn’t just any bodykit that he had his eye on, but the much-revered and drooled-over Pandem kit – developed by Rocket Bunny for the E30 saloon, which Sander sought to cunningly rework to fit. While he was busy with the measuring tape, he also figured out he’d be wanting some truly fat wheels to fill out the new corners. So he set about searching for such things on the interweb. In due course, the ideal set was found – a refreshingly wacky quartet of Carline three-piece splits, rich in old-school Center Line-style shininess, and at 10.5-inches wide they

seemed like they’d be girthsome enough to satisfy. However, it transpired he’d need to go even wider. He simply grabbed a broader set of lips and rebuilt the wheels to be even meatier.

And so came the fitting of the bodykit. Something not for the faint of heart. “I procrastinated for days, because I knew once you start grinding away at that metal there’s no way back,” he grins. Sander cracked out the power tools and got busy.

After much trial-fitting, tweaking, metal trimming, he was eventually able to step back and gaze upon his magnificently loopy creation. Possibly the least sensible estate car the world has ever seen. The addition of the custom rear spoiler really adds to the lunacy; a unique setup by General Wheels, it was made-to-measure for the Touring and exudes a rich Touring Car vibe. Substantial-looking bit of kit, isn’t it?

“After many weeks of welding and grinding and polishing, over and over

PANDEM-ONIUM

Rocket Bunny’s Pandem sub-brand has seen Kei Miura’s iconic brand achieve colossal global success, with their ever-expanding range of widebody kits catering for far more than just Japanese domestic models. You can even get a Pandem kit for a Mk2 VW Golf! And it was a bit of a no-brainer for the company to design and manufacture a kit for the E30-generation BMW, given the model’s massive popularity these days. The kits can be bought off-the-shelf comprising front and rear wide arches, skirts, front lip and rear wing, all guaranteeing perfect fitment thanks to Miura’s fastidious laser-scanning. The only problem here for Sander was that the E30 kit’s made for saloons, not estates... But as you can see, this problem didn’t slow him down for long!



HOT RIDE



TECH SPEC: BMW 3-SERIES TOURING

Styling

Pandem widebody kit; custom green wrap; custom General Wheels rear spoiler; E36 front splitter with M3 lip.

Tuning

M50B25 2.5-litre straight-six; custom exhaust manifold and 3in exhaust system; 5-speed manual.

Chassis

18in Carline 3-piece split-rims; 245/35 Toyo T1-R tyres; home-made custom air-ride setup.

Interior

Z3 front seats; QSP steering wheel; MTX component speakers and amp; 2x 10in Ascendant Audio subwoofers with 3500rms amp.

Thanks

To Byba Kits; WrapJunkies and Sten Bosch; General Wheels; and Marco Op't Root.

➔ again, the entire Pandem was done and it was ready to go for its roadworthiness inspection," he says. "There was a problem in that the regulations state the doors have to be able to be opened from both inside and outside. And of course the new rear arches cover up where the old door handles would have been. After a lot of thinking, I fitted some door-popper buttons under the wings so you can open them from outside." Ingenious, huh? This bizarre car just keeps on serving up wonderful surprises.

"The interior's also changed completely," he goes on. "The front seats are from a Z3, while everything else inside was pulled out and restored before refitting. There's a totally new audio system too."

By this point it was approaching springtime and the car was crying out for some paint, or a wrap, or something. A lot of prep-work and fastidious finishing had taken place to perfect the bodywork, and Sander felt it was high time he paid a visit to WrapJunkies to transform his grey Touring into something more appropriate to the fresh lunacy of the reworked body. Et voila – now it's ludicrously green.

"You don't see a lot of E30 Tourings at car shows," Sander ponders, eyeballing his meisterwerk with the expression of someone who's sown the wind and just realised he's now about to reap the whirlwind. And he's right, you don't, and you'll never, ever see one as mad as this.

As the perennially befuddling Black Eyed Peas would put it, "I'm a get get get get you drunk, get you love-drunk off my hump." And no, we've got no idea what that means either. But it's approximately just as mental as this E30 Touring. ■



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DIY DAY JOBS & WEEKEND WONDERS

INTERCOOLER COOLING SPRAY

Make your intercooler... er, cooler!



On a forced induction motor, an intercooler's job is to use the ambient air passing through it to cool the hot induction charge before it gets to the cylinders. Reducing intake temperatures equals a double-whammy of denser air for power, and less chance of detonation.

It stands to reason then, that anything that can make your intercooler more efficient is a good thing, and that's what makes intercooler sprays so popular. In fact, some cars like Evos and Scoobys, have even had these as standard over the years.

The science is sound: a liquid like water has to absorb heat in order to evaporate. This means, when you spray it on a surface, it will draw out heat until it can vaporise. The same reason it can be 30°C on holiday but you'll still freeze your tits off when you first get out of the pool.

Anyway, this evaporative cooling is what makes an intercooler spray reduce air charge temperatures. In some situations, this type of mod can be used for short-term cooling of your radiator too.

DO IT!

1 LOCATE YOUR BOTTLE

First things first. You need to find a good place to mount your bottle. Ideally keep it as far away from the engine as possible, so it doesn't soak up loads of heat when the car is running. That said, remember that inside a bumper or under an arch is only a good idea if you can actually fill the bottle up when you need to! If you can get some air flow around the bottle through the grille though, all the better.

Some race setups mount these in the boot or even inside the car, but you'll likely be needing loads of extra tubing and a more powerful pump for that.



THE GEAR

Fitting Time:About an hour

Costs:Windscreen washer kit: £7.39

Garden irrigation misters:(X2) £3.78

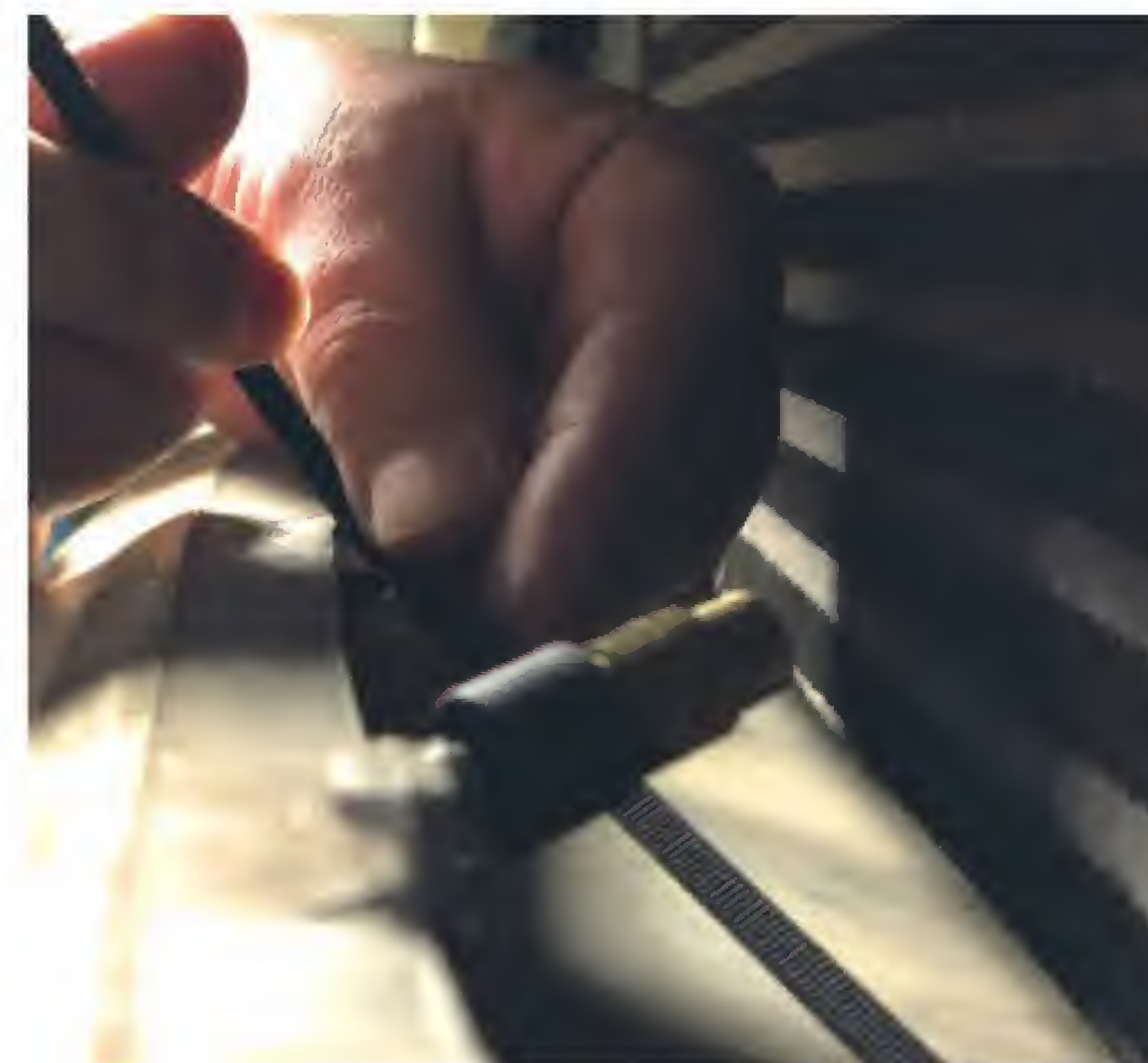
There are two popular ways of going about this job. You can either tap into your existing windscreen washers, or, as we have, get yourself a whole new kit.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both. If you're using your standard washer bottle, all the wiring is already there; all you need do is mount some nozzles. Screen wash is very good for cooling too. Then again, it can be pretty bloody distracting having your windscreen soaked every time you hit the button, so some choose to install a manual cut-off valve or disconnect the washers altogether. This works well in the short term (say, on the track), but isn't all that great, or very legal, on the road.

On the other hand, basic washer bottle kits for classic and kit cars are cheap. We got ours on eBay for well under a tenner and it comes with everything from a pump to fittings. The key thing to remember is that, ideally, you want the water to mist onto your intercooler, and standard washer jets are crap for that. So, spend a couple of quid extra and get yourself some misting nozzles from your local garden centre.

The downside of these kits of course, is that fitting takes a little longer. But that's where we're here to help.





2 ROUTE YOUR NOZZLES

We've got a large FMIC and have chosen a simple dual-nozzle setup, but you could have more. There are lots of different types of pipe connectors/fittings available, from tees to elbows, so it's easy to run nozzles in a series,

some even choose to make a ring, a bit like a NOS/CO2 intercooler spray. Equally, a single nozzle may do the job for a smaller side or top-mount intercooler. When attaching your nozzles, you can make

all sorts of flashy brackets and the like, but often the simplest solution, a couple of cable ties for instance, can be the best. If it's not too permanent, you can move the nozzles around after testing.



3 ROUTE YOUR WIRING

Although some specialist kits come with a temperature trigger, generally speaking you'll be using a button, and this is going to have to be within easy reach of the driver's seat. Once you've found somewhere to mount yours, you'll need to run your wires through the bulkhead to the pump, and connect to a power source. It's always a good idea to install an inline fuse too, just in case. With it all plugged in, hit the button to make sure the pump is working, and then you can securely mount your bottle.



4 SPRAY AWAY!

Before you can test your new spray, you'll have to fill up the bottle (obviously — Jules). Although it's fine to use water and, in an ideal situation, you want it to be cold — don't worry too much because it'll inevitably heat up under the bonnet anyway. For drag racing and track work, some like to add ice, but the main point of these systems is to take advantage of evaporative cooling, rather than physical cooling with a cold liquid.

With that in mind, generally the best solution is to use a mix of water and alcohol, like a 50/50 mix of water and rubbing alcohol, an isopropyl-based glass cleaner or even screenwash. Alcohol evaporates off faster than water, and draws out more heat. Remember not to just bung in pure alcohol though. With a hot engine that's an accident waiting to happen!



HOT RIDE



Words: & Photography: Steve McCann

Slice 'n' Dice...

Taking a grinder to this van was a mighty gamble, but David Hughes showed what Vauxhall should have done...



HOT RIDE

OWNER PROFILE:

Name: David Hughes

What other cars do you have?

I like my retro stuff too; I have a Karmann Ghia and two Imps!

We hear you do a bit of racing?

Yeah, I race stock cars, previously national saloons but now classic hot roads.

So what's next then?

I have no idea!



Giving it a bit of spit and polish



Sometimes things just hit you. Thoughts appear in your head from nowhere and take you to places you had no intention of going. That's exactly what happened to David Hughes when he first saw a Mk5 Astra van many moons ago. His immediate thought was, 'That would make a bloody amazing pick-up'.

At that point most would leave it be but for years it burned in David's head. It became an itch he had to scratch. "I had to wait a while until it became an affordable risk," he says. "But it just had to be done!"

The moment finally arrived in 2015, although it nearly happened two years previous. "My mate bought one and we planned to give it the chop, but he bottled out at the last minute." David laughs,

"There was no hesitation for me though. When I got mine it went straight from trailer to garage and I cut the roof off right away!" To be fair, he had waited a long time to get to this stage.

RAISING THE ROOF

Although David acted fast, the approach was well planned. The van had the perfect natural line for the chop along the side, but he was quick to point out the back of the cab is where many go wrong with conversions. After the roof removal, he carefully fitted the four-point cage, rear cab panels, custom window and welded a tailgate in place. The next tricky bit

ASTRA PICK-UP

Flock me, a 1.9 turbo diesel conversion



VXR repeater surrounds



“There was no hesitation – it went straight from trailer to garage and I cut the roof off”

Watercooled IND CC10 18x9.5 wheels
this side; but not on the other





➔ was boxing it all up. David plumped for an industrial look here, creating an aluminium platform that even includes an electronic lid; clever touch!

With the pick-up taking shape (literally), it was time to chuck some other parts into the mix. Keeping close to an OEM style, a VXR front bumper, grille and side repeater surrounds were added along with XP sideskirts and an XP rear bumper skirt. This beefed up the body nicely and after a respray in a subtle Audi Daytona grey it was ready for some spectacular rims.

KEEPING IT WHEEL

David may have been decisive with the styling but wheels are a different story. He changes his mind almost on a daily basis. "All the shows I've been to, it's had different wheels on," he smirks. "I find it so hard to decide that I'm now running with different sets on each side. I still don't know which I prefer".

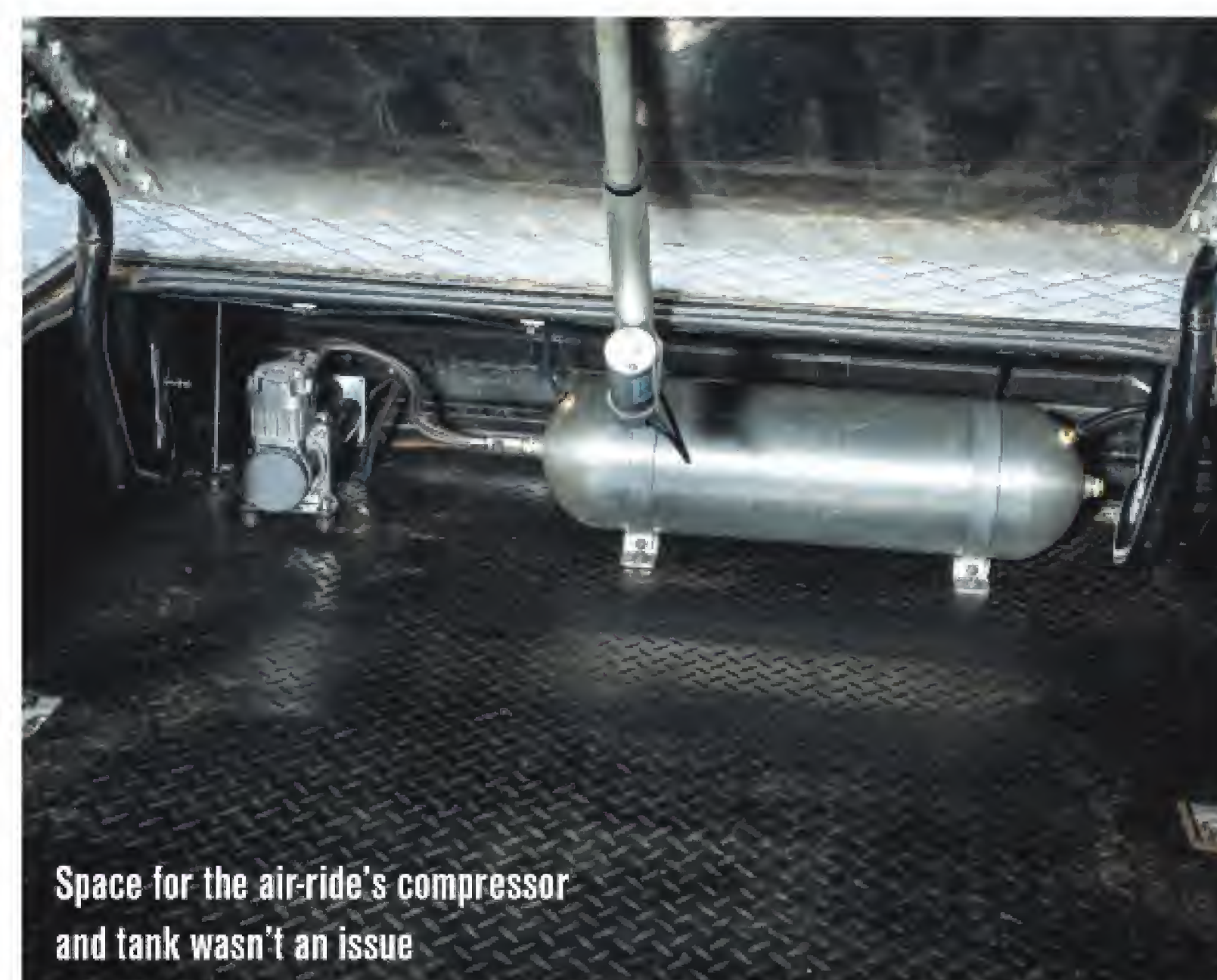
Glancing at the sparkling brown WCI CC10s and then the Stuttgart STX rims in silver, we know exactly what he means. Both look sensational with the body slammed on top; thanks to the Slam Series air-ride setup and the custom work underneath to make them fit.

WELL FLOCKED

Inside the cabin, there's an OEM flavour with Astra VXR seats and VXR steering wheel. A flocked dash,

centre console and pillars add a touch of luxury while Easystreet gauges give a clue that there's no longer a 1.3 lump living here. Indeed, David's given the van some bite to match the bark with a Z19TDH 1.9 turbo diesel conversion. He's a big fan of this power unit so treated it to an uprated hybrid turbo and added a VXR intercooler to reach a potent 210bhp.

It's 12 years since Vauxhall launched the Mk5 Astra van, but this Ute conversion still looks way cooler than anything that comes out of the factory. David can be proud of his efforts as it's all down to his skill and certainly not just a slice of luck. ■



Space for the air-ride's compressor and tank wasn't an issue



Astra VXR half leather seats



VXR steering wheel, flocked dash and centre console

TECH SPEC: VAUXHALL ASTRA VAN

STYLING

Custom Pick-up conversion; VXR front bumper; VXR grille; VXR repeater surrounds; XP side skirts; XP rear bumper skirt; 4-point roll cage; electric opening deck-lid; Devil eye projector headlights; Audi Daytona Grey respray.

TUNING

1.9 Z19dth diesel engine conversion; VXR intercooler; uprated hybrid turbo; swirl flap delete; A/C delete; remapped to 210bhp; Flocked engine cover.

CHASSIS

V2 air-ride management; 444c compressor; Slam Series bags; rear spring platform modified; Watercooled IND CC10 18x9.5 wheels in BMW sparkling brown on driver's side; Stuttgart STX 18x9.5 wheels on passenger side.

INTERIOR

Astra VXR half leather seats; VXR steering wheel; flocked dash; flocked centre console; flocked A/B pillars; carbon silver trim; Easystreet gauges.

THANKS

Thanks to my partner Ashleigh for making the tea and daughter Mia for passing the tools! Eck Cunningham, Paul Potts, Peter the Painter, Allan Hay and Joseph and all the lads that help with everything I do.

“It's had different wheels on for every show I've been to”





Words: Sam Preston Photography: Sam Preston, Slim Jules, Autosport

AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL

With far more focus on aftermarket tuning than in recent years and a big shake-up in layout, 2019's Autosport International event proved to be one of the most satisfying for a very long time indeed...

"Pack your bags and grab your camera, you're coming to a motor show with me," the text read from Jules early one morning back in January. A motor show at the start of the year... could he finally be dragging me along to the infamous Tokyo Auto Salon with him?

Well... not quite. You see, a few hours later, I found myself on a train not to Heathrow Airport, but instead to the glamorous NEC in sunny Birmingham for the annual Autosport International soirée. But with the much-loved event this year boasting a whole-new layout and plenty of fresh attractions, thankfully it was far from the anti-climax it could've been...

Autosport runs from Thursday through to Sunday, acting as both a huge networking opportunity for the European automotive industry as well as showcasing to the general public just what 2019 is set to bring to the

wonderful world of cars.

As such, not only will you find plenty of stunning brand-new road and race cars on display to ogle over and even sit inside, but also a sea of talented local engineering and manufacturing firms that keep the global automotive world spinning on a daily basis. If you ever need a reminder just how much automotive talent our little island harnesses, Autosport is the place to come.

This year, there was also displays housing the latest fleets of Formula 1, BTCC and WRC machinery, as well as a big pile of famous faces from the scene on-hand for photos and interviews. To top it all off, the Live Action Arena gave show-goers the chance to check out some of the aforementioned vehicles in motion in the hands of famous drivers from throughout the ages.

It seemed like organisers had made even more of an effort than usual to house as many modified machines as possible within the NEC's walls this time around, too, with the capacious Hall 3 largely filled with aftermarket road cars of varying severity. From the top-end wrapped hypercars of TV-star and tuner, Yiannimize, through to a handful of stanced-out beauties on the nearby Kream Developments stand, it was nice to see the aftermarket world represented in such a positive light.

Pockets full of leaflets for tasty car parts that we'll never be able to afford, we left the event extremely satisfied. It's nice to see Autosport adapting to fit around the YouTube-inspired, modified-obsessed car world we live in and creating a thoroughly entertaining few days for us in the process.

PORSCHE 964 ▶

Matt Glassup's Porsche 911 that was sitting pretty on the Tarox stand is a firm favourite of ours and acts as the perfect illustration that sometimes, less really is more. Boasting bright gold Etabeta split rims that offer a superb contrast to the simple green bodywork, the car also features the perfect drop to complement the late '80s/early '90s vibe, this coupé oozes from every pore.



Nothing to see here,
just a McLaren P1



Fast Car feature cars were...



... everywhere



OUT THERE



The daily...

YIANNIMIZE ▲

Unless you've been living in a cave for the last few years, we're sure you'll be well aware of Gianni – the owner of London-based wrapping firm Yiannimize and also a regular on both YouTube and TV. Showcasing his high-end work with his very own duo of Lambos – an Aventador and Urus – both of which have been wrapped in the most striking of electric green colours you could possibly imagine, his work represents the side of the modified car world where money is no object.



... the show car



Worth more than a lot of the supercars on display



Car Audio Security turned up with a host of hot cars



KREAM DEVELOPMENTS ▶

Another London-based car customiser that had a stand this year was Kream Developments – housing the likes of a flip-coloured Nissan GT-R, wide-body M3 and even a slammed Ferrari F355 this time around. Reserved for those who want to take their project that little bit further than most, these guys are the go-to firm when you've got a crazy idea in your head that you'd like to turn into a reality.



A Ferrari F355, yesterday



We're loving this Kream built M3



Flipping 'eck



Anyone for a Porsche 935 (2019)? Tough, they are all sold



OUT THERE



SLAMMEDUK

Representing the more realistic side of the tuning world, SlammedUK's stand featured the likes of a GT86 that'd been treated to a stonking single-turbo 2JZ engine conversion, as well as an expertly-blended wide-body kit and some killer split rims. The company's main man, Jordan, could also be spotted on the main stage with the hosts of the event, explaining the modified car scene to the masses. Respect!



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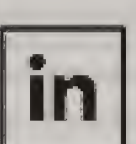
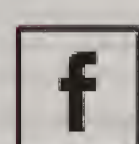
ADJUSTABILITY

Unique variable adjustment design allows the wastegate actuator base and cap to be oriented independently.

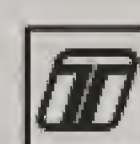


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Plum Crazy

Words: Dan Bevis Photography: Simmy Photography

Standard V8 RS4 not mad enough for you? How about bagging one over carbon wheels and painting it purple...

History is studded with inventions so improbable and brilliantly unlikely it's hard to fathom just what spark of genius can have spirited them into being in the first place. Plate glass, for example: you could leave us alone with a bucket of sand for an eternity and it would never once occur to us to heat it up until it turned into a window. Or radio: what manner of madman decided you could send intangible sounds over wiggly invisible lines through the air, and some magic piece of equipment in people's homes could replicate the noises in real time? It sounds ridiculous. There's no way it should work.

The Audi RS4 is another invention that beggars belief. The idea of cramming enough horsepower to embarrass a Porsche 911 (along with enough torque to make the world a slightly different shape every time you tickle the throttle slightly) into a big, sensible family estate car is just so silly it seems like an absinthe dream. You've got the traditional long-roof format harassed dads traditionally use to take the kids to football practice, then load up with hedge clippings to take to the tip before heading off to Ikea. But some deranged looper has shoehorned a sports car engine in there. It's idiotic.

We love idiotic cars here, naturally, and the RS4 has been on our lottery wishlist for some time. The original B5, built from 1999-2001, was a demented creation with a biturbo V6 – but for us the real sweet spot is the B7 – the one they made from 2006-

08, stuffed to bursting point with a 4.2-litre V8. There's just no need to put an engine that big in this car. Which is precisely why we love it to bits. And that's the case for Jamie Jackson too: "I've always been a V8 fan, especially having been brought up around big old American cars," he says. "I wanted something more modern but it had to have a V8, and when this came up at the right price and the right time, I jumped at the chance!"

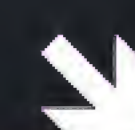
LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

Parental influence often tends to work out this way, and since Jamie's old man was into modifying it was inevitable he'd be doing just the same as soon as he was old enough. "I got the bug early," he confirms. "I started modding a Peugeot 206 when I was 16, then I moved on to a Lupo GTI which I converted to 1.8T and pushed to 403bhp – that one got a couple of mag features. I also now have an Evo VI running 650bhp, and a 1964 Chevrolet Impala that I'm currently working on which will end up on hydros."

All of this is enabled by Jamie's day job as the boss-man at Performance Direct in Barnsley. He turned his hobby into a job and now his company supplies and fits top-quality go-faster bits to all manner of cars, as well as building quality show cars and flashing them about all over the UK scene. The nature of working in this sort of area makes it easier to justify the purchases of silly



AUDI RS4



HOT RIDE



motors as you can pretend you're doing it for official promotional purposes (rather than just wanting to drive awesome cars). Although that's not to say Jamie's thrown an unlimited budget at this RS4. The accountants have to be appeased. Which explains why, when he bought the Audi, it was a little rough-and-ready to say the least...

"The RS4 came up on an auction site. It had been stood for three-and-a-half years in a police compound," he recalls. "When I went to pick the car up it wasn't in the best condition, and needed a full paint job. The standard DRC [Dynamic Ride Control] system was shot too."

None of this was a problem, as our man had two big plans to remedy these issues right away. Number one was to use his skilled team of bodywork elves to re-shoot the shell in its stock Avus Silver. And number two was to fit a whole new air-ride system, comprising Air Lift Performance struts and bags with AccuAir V2 management. "Fitting air-ride was actually cheaper than replacing the DRC," he reasons, and you can't really argue with that.

INTERIOR DESIGNS

The interior had taken a bit of a hammering in all that time in storage, which Jamie saw as the perfect excuse to freshen it up with a retrim, before taking the



OWNER PROFILE:

Name: Jamie Jackson

Occupation: Owner, Performance Direct Barnsley

First car: Peugeot 206

Favourite car: 1964 Chevrolet Impala

Favourite modification to your car: Carbon wheels

Favourite show/event: Elsecar at the Races, or FittedUK

Track day or show and shine? Show and shine

Lessons learned from this project: Never leave it till a few weeks before a show to start changing things again

What's next? Finish building the '64 Impala



The charcoal theme spreads from steering wheel and headlining to dash and centre console

big RS down to Ryan at Custom Pipes in Doncaster to get that V8 properly bellowing through some lairy new exhausts. With all of this taken care of, he was happy to run the car around for a bit, smartened up and gleaming like a new pin, and infusing every daily drive with a frisson of bent-eight menace.

But then he changed his mind. Ultimate Dubs was coming up, and Jamie was keen to rework the RS4 into a classy showpiece for the business. Trouble was, he only had three months. But tight timelines often squeeze out the best results. "I asked my friend Andy Meigh to give it a full repaint in Merlin Purple," he

grins, singling out one of our favourite Audi Exclusive shades – sort of like Nissan Midnight Purple but with a more malevolent twist. "Then it was off to Emily at Luxe Auto Interiors for a full custom retrim."

Yep, another retrim. And this one really is quite astonishing. Those super-desirable RS seats have been retrimmed in bull leather with charcoal Alcantara centres and laser-etched hexagons, and the charcoal theme carries over to the doorcards, steering wheel, headlining, dash and centre console.

The other really noticeable feature is the liberal sprinkling of carbon fibre; the OE carbon option-box had already been ticked, and added to this you'll see carbon seat backs, steering wheel, and of course the finish of the air tank in that beautifully precise custom boot build. Carbon's a bit of a theme throughout, in fact – everything from the numberplate plinth and mirror caps to the badges themselves is crafted from element number six, as well as copious details under the bonnet: engine covers, GruppeM induction, scuttle panel, battery cover, ECU cover, header tank and bottle cover, the works. Oh yes, and the wheels...

"The car's now running 20-inch 3SDM 3.01 3-piece split-rims," Jamie beams. "They're fully custom, with carbon lips by Richard at Unique Carbon in Wakefield." It's one of the sexiest wheel treatments we've seen recently, and we imagine Jamie's now VERY careful when he's parallel parking.



WAGONS ROLLIN'

The B7 RS4 was a bit of a departure from the RS Audis that came before it. The original RS2 was a zany estate (or 'Avant') that seemed to think it was a Porsche, while the first-gen B5 RS4 had only been available as an Avant too. The B7, however, could be had as a four-door saloon or even a convertible – although the appeal of wagon is a key part of the RS Audi image; anyone can shove a big engine in a saloon car, but it takes a special kind of lunacy to try to turn an estate into a sports car – and that's the one most buyers went for. Half the fun is headbutting the 155mph limiter on the autobahn while carrying an Ikea wardrobe in the back...





TECH SPEC: AUDI RS4

Styling

Full repaint in Audi Merlin Purple; gloss black grille surround; carbon fibre Audi rings; carbon smooth numberplate plinth; carbon oil cooler splitter; headlight internals painted black; carbon wing mirrors; carbon B and C pillars; carbon RS4 side and boot badges; smoked LED rear lights; door trims and roof bars wrapped in Satin Black; windows tints.

Tuning

4.2-litre V8; custom stainless steel exhaust system; GruppeM carbon fibre induction kit; carbon scuttle panel; carbon battery cover; carbon ECU cover; carbon header tank and bottle cover; standard carbon engine covers; 6-speed manual, Quattro.

Chassis

10x20in 3SDM 3.01 3-piece split-rims – with carbon fibre lips; shadow chrome centres and neo-chrome bolts; 255/30 Nankang NS-II tyres; Air Lift Performance Series air-ride with AccuAir V2 management; brake callipers painted purple.

Interior

Carbon fibre/Alcantara steering wheel; seats retrimmed in bull leather with charcoal Alcantara centres and laser-etched hexagons; carbon seat backs; doorcard centres in charcoal Alcantara; dash and centre console in charcoal Alcantara and purple stitching; charcoal Alcantara headlining; armrest in hexagon-lasered Alcantara; OE RS4 carbon trims plus carbon gearknob; handbrake lever and side dash panels; full custom boot build with carbon air tank.

Thanks

Many thanks to all the guys at Performance Direct in Barnsley; Andy Meigh for the paintwork; Richard Wilson at Unique Carbon for all the carbon fibre work; Emily at Luxe Auto Interiors for the retrim and help over the years; Duncan and Rikki at REDesign for the boot build; Shane at HDD Detail for the ceramic coating; Andy Cooper, Shaun, Matty, Foxy, Asa, and many others! #teampd

“I’m lucky having my own business in the trade, and many friends have offered a helping hand on the nights getting the car ready for shows,” he continues. “This car has been in bits on more than one occasion! It gets out and about to a lot of shows, and I like to put it on display in the shop for our customers to see, which gets quite a good reaction from most people!”

It certainly hooked us in. Jamie’s upgrades and alterations have taken a dishevelled and unloved example of an unusual car and turned it into one of the very best of the breed, with an uber-premium finish and plenty of eye-catching and unique touches. And most importantly, it doesn’t take itself too seriously. The RS4 is a fundamentally silly car, and the act of painting one purple, riddling it with carbon and dumping it on the ground over some crazy wheels is exactly the sort of thing the long-roof Audi deserves. It’s unashamedly bonkers, and the world needs more of that. ■



Full custom boot build with carbon air tank



A purple warrior

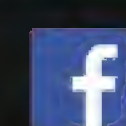
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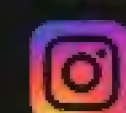
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FAST PROJECTS



TOM'S R5 GT TURBO

Reflex Auto Design are called into action while Tom makes a start on the interior.

START  NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: GIVE THE LAD A CHANCE

P082





DALE'S 1971 MERCEDES W114

The Merc is now in the safe hands of The Install Company as they set about getting it on air.

START  NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: GIVE THE LAD A CHANCE

P083





SLIM JULES' BMW E92

It has been a while but the E92 is back and with a new set of shoes it's looking better than ever.

START  NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: ADVAN TYRES • AIR LIFT AIR RIDE • AUTOSTARS • HYBRID TURBOS • MILLTEK EXHAUST • FORGE FMIC

P084





MIDGE'S BEETLE 1.8T

The Bug is sounding better than ever after some Pioneering electronics!

START  NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: K&N INDUCTION KIT • COBRA RECLINERS • SMOOTHED FRONT BUMPER • AIR LIFT • RUSTY PAINT

P086





ZERO EV TESLA-POWERED R32 DRIFTER

The Zero EV boys have been busy fitting electric power steering and fabricating a new dash!

START  NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: TESLA ELECTRIC MOTOR • PB COILOVERS • JAFFA CAKES • 19-INCH WHEELS

P088



MISSING IN ACTION



SLIM JULES' BMW E91

The E91 has actually made some progress this month but you'll have to tune in next month to see it.

START  NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: HYDRO-DIPPED INTERIOR • BC COILOVERS • TINTS • DIAMOND CAR MATS • M SPORT CARBON WHEEL

MIA





GLENDA'S AUDI RS4

Glenda is STILL looking for the perfect set of wheels to compliment the car's new found KW stance.

START  NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: MILLTEK EXHAUST • KW COILOVERS

MIA





MIDGE'S AUDI TT

Midge is bankrupt after forking out for not one, but two teal interior retrimms. He'll be back soon.

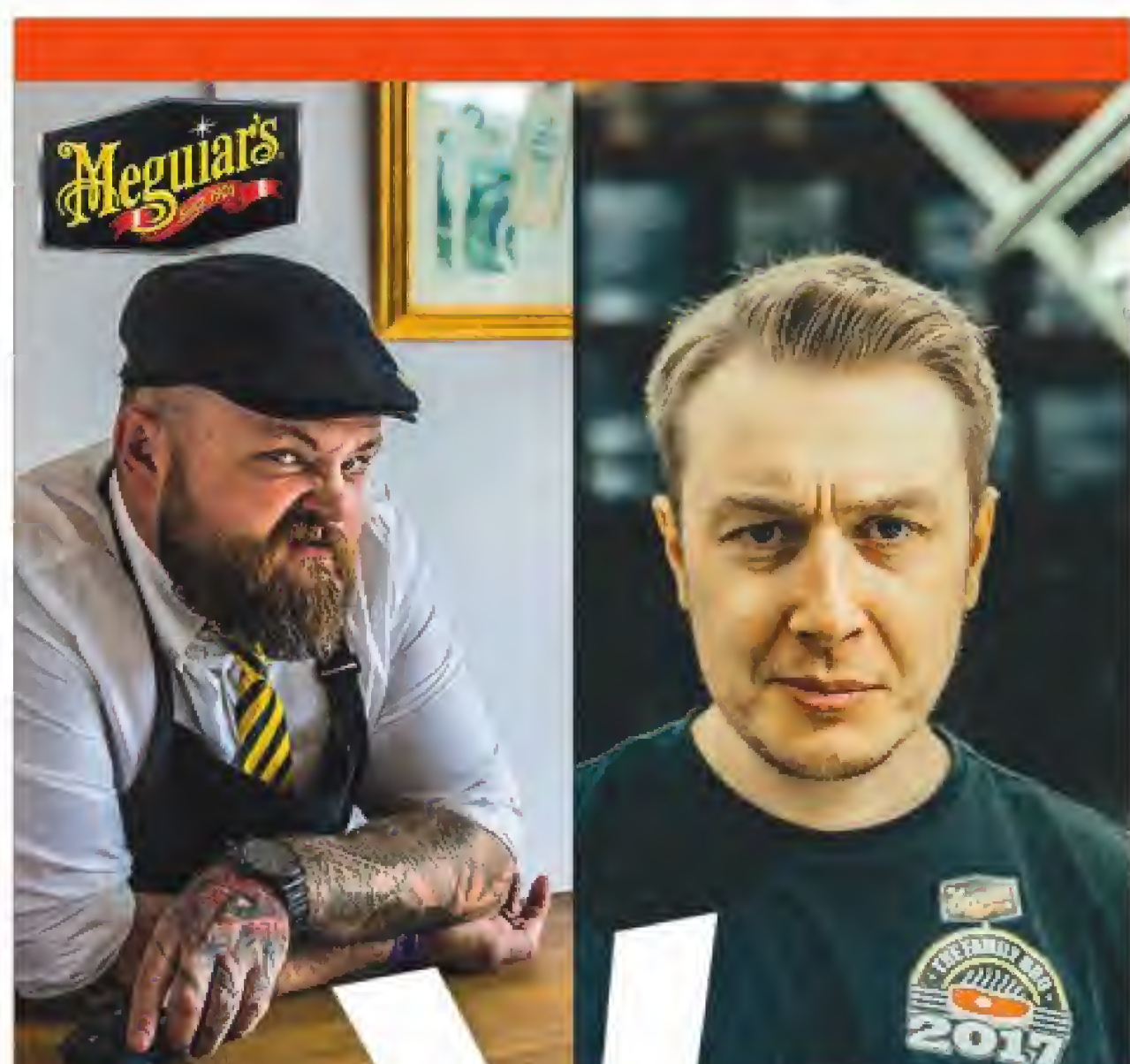
START  NEVER FINISHED

MAIN MODS: 3M WRAP • VOSSEN WHEELS • AIR LIFT SUSPENSION • TUNED ENGINE • ICE INSTALL

MIA



FAST PROJECTS



Tom V Dale

TOM'S R5 GT TURBO



Everyone knows Meguiar's and if you read this magazine you'll also know that each year they build a fresh demo vehicle (we've featured the last two, the Crown Victoria Cop Car in 2017 and the Sunny Pickup in 2018). They don't just build these cars to showcase their products but to demonstrate their passion for vehicles. In essence, the guys and girls behind Meguiar's UK are just like you and us: car nuts.

So what's Tom V Dale? Well, Tom and Dale are the Meguiar's guys responsible for the demo vehicles (as well as lots of other stuff), and each year that they embark on the build journey, their conflicting styles and opinions on car building clash. So this year, the head honchos at Megs UK had enough of the bickering and told them to build a car each. And of course, being boys, this has escalated into a fierce battle to see who can build the better ride. Both cars will be finished for Players Classic in June 2019, and we're going to follow the builds right up until reveal...

Name: Tom Clarke

Job Role: Senior marketer, who oversees the UK marketing office, advert placement and key account marketing fulfilment.

If you've been following the build online (see video link) as well as in these very fine pages you'll be aware I've given the guys at Reflex Auto Design an almighty restoration job. "I was going to say I've seen worse, but I haven't" are the exact words that came out of Reflex Auto Design's Matt Leggett's mouth when taking a look underneath the R5. But if there's one bodyshop who can turn this car around, it's them, and this is why they will be taking on the majority of the work over the coming months. Plus I've known the guys and gals at Reflex for almost 20-years, so I wasn't going to take it anywhere else. Basically I didn't choose

the bodyshop. The bodyshop chose me! Anyway, where are we now? Well, the strip down has started, the wheels have been taken off and the lips sent away to be polished. Reflex's next job is to remove the kit to assess the work ahead – I might keep my distance on that day.

The Dimma kit will very much be staying and this car will be a homage to the '90s modified car culture that shaped my modified car obsession.

With this in mind, I've also been to see Dave The Trimmer to discuss my interior, which involves RenaultSport Recaros and bright blue Alcantara. Watch this space...

CONTACTS

www.meguiars.co.uk
www.reflexautodesign.com
www.davethetrimmer.com



"To me." "To you."



Dale shows off his
incredible lifting skills

DALE'S 1971 MERCEDES W114



Name: Dale Masterman

Job Role: Sales and marketing executive, events coordinator and resident paint nerd.

So the car is currently with Phil at The Install Company. Phil is one of my best mates and one of only a few guys I would ever trust enough to build a show car with. I've known him for many, many years and seen what he's capable of. He's also had his hand in the last two Meguiar's projects, so I'm trusting him to bring the fire on this build too.

We are currently calculating all the chassis stats and numbers to make sure the car sits and rolls just right. As you can imagine, there's not an abundance of air-ride kits available off the shelf for a Mercedes W114. So we are going custom but this is one of Phil's specialities and I know he'll deliver the perfect bespoke Air

Lift assisted set-up.

We're also working with Detroit Steel Wheels to get the perfect wheel fitment for the build. Calculating wheel offsets and widths on a car with a bespoke suspension setup that hasn't been built yet is a dark art. And one we'll only know we've got right in the final stages of the build. Fingers crossed.

We've also been busy removing the interior for the guys at Cobra Seat to reshape and retrim. Cobra are one of the biggest names in interiors and although they are perhaps most famous for their extensive range of aftermarket bucket seats and recliners, they are also brilliant retrimmers and are happy to take on projects like this.

As well as all that, we're also figuring out where we are going to bolt all the

JVC audio. And all this needs to be done before we ship the car off to Kustom Kolors. Wish us luck!



CONTACTS

www.meguiars.co.uk
www.kustomkolors.co.uk
www.cobraseats.com
[@theinstallcompany](https://www.instagram.com/theinstallcompany)



Off with the old



Yokohama Advan Sport goodness

JULES' BMW E92

She's back. But in truth she never went away!



My E92 hasn't been in these pages

for a while and that's because I've done nothing with it, until now. Well, till October last year. So why has it taken me three months to bring you an update? Let me explain...

Cast your mind back to 4 October, the Thursday before TRAX. The E92 was feeling sorry for itself on the drive, so I decided to cheer it up by ordering a new set of wheels and tyres, and by fixing the lambda sensor that was throwing the engine management light on. That's right, that was on Thursday. TRAX is on the Sunday. Time to initiate panic mode.

The first job was to contact Autostar and get a set of their then-fresh off the boat A510 wheels, in 9.5 and 10.5x19-inch fitment. These wheels are what's known as an absolute bargain and I knew the Hyper Black (shadow chrome) finish

would compliment the Frozen Grey paint perfectly. One thing to note with these wheels is the aggressive ET30 (f) and ET22 (r) fitment, something I should of paid more attention to when ordering the Yokohama Advan Sport tyres after I got off the blower to Nuts 4 Wheels (Autostar's UK distributor).

I could bore you with endless reasons why I always fit Yokos to my projects, but I'll give you two: one, they are bloody grippy – a necessity when you're pushing over 450bhp through your rear wheels; and two, I knew James Brown at Yokohama would get them to me pronto – another necessity, as I wasn't exactly blessed with time.

Next job? Order that lambda sensor. I needed this now, not next day, as it was one of the front ones (the 335i has four of the bloody things), which is a right pain

to fit for someone with chunky fingers. Who did I call? Euro Car Parts. They had them in stock and even had one of their awesome promotions on, which was handy considering the Bosch part I needed was usually £255. I saved over £75 and their famous little white van was outside my house within the hour! How's that for service? I didn't even manage to get a picture of the part (which is pretty boring anyway), as I got straight to work getting it fitted.

As expected, the wheels and tyres turned up on Friday, so I popped them down to the good guys at Revamp Autoworks in Orpington. Midge has used them on many occasions, so I knew the fresh Autostar wheels would be in safe hands. And they were. Top job boys.

Fast forward a few hours and I was back at my house, jacking up the E92



and fitting the new wheels. But as you'll see from one of the pictures above, the rear tyres were a bit chunky! I went for a 275 on the back, which is about right for 10.5-inch wide wheel. But not on an ET22 rear wheel on a slammed 335i. I told you I should have paid more attention to the offset when ordering the tyres!

Obviously they 'fitted' as I just jacked up the air-ride. But it looked a bit pants. And that's the last thing you want when you're showing the car at one of the UK's biggest shows. After all that effort, I decided to

leave the car at home. Sad times, but it was the right decision.

It was only last week that I finally had the motivation after the Christmas rush to order a set of 255/35s for the rear, get them fitted and on the car. And as you can see, they look a million times better. It's tight, but the rear wheels now tuck when aired-out.

There is one problem though. The new Autostar wheels expose my dirty, old, rusty brakes. So you know what's coming next readers...

THIS MONTH

Autostar A510.....	£659
2x Yoko Advan Sport 225/35ZR19	£230
2x Yoko Advan Sport 255/35ZR19	£248
Bosh Lambda Sensor.....	£180

Total **£1317**

CONTACTS

www.nuts4wheels.com
www.yokohama.co.uk
www.eurocarparts.com
www.revamp-autoworks.co.uk



NEXT MONTH

New brake discs and pads! 'Hello, is that EBC?'

FAST PROJECTS



MIDGE'S RUSTY BUG

Midge fills a massive hole, and for once it's not in his chubby face.



You may have noticed that my Beetle was MIA from the last issue. That's mostly because, after dropping the best part of 2-bags on my funky new Cobra interior, I've been a little busy saving up... for shit like rent, and food.

But let's forget all that rubbish for a moment, I've not forgotten the real priorities in life, and by that, I mean I've finally got my mitts on one of the finest headunits ever to grace the pages of FC.

I'll be totally honest, there's nothing wrong with the budget item I've had in there for the last couple of years. It's just that I reviewed the new Pioneer SPH-10BT smartphone receiver a few months ago and, as soon as I switched the bugger on, I knew I HAD to have one. It really is that good. I remember coming over all

Wayne's World (damn you're old – Initial G) and saying to myself 'It will be mine... oh yes, it will be mine.' And guess what, now it is!

It's not the same one I tested of course, although I would have quite happily had that one away given half the chance. Then again, this thing is not only packed full of features, and essentially turns your singleDIN into a full screen multimedia unit, but it's only 120-quid. For everything you get it seems like the bargain of the century!

Fitting took all of about 10-minutes, and setting up all the connectivity even less. And guess what? It's just as amazing as it was the first time round! That's the thing about us FC monkeys, we might get to see all the products from around

the world, but we still get excited about spending our own cash of some of the very best.

I guess all that's left for me to do now is crank it up to 11 and annoy the neighbours even more than normal. I'll let you know how I get on...

THIS MONTH

Pioneer SPH-10BT Smartphone Receiver

Total **£120**

CONTACTS

www.pioneer-car.eu/uk

NEXT MONTH

I'll probably get back to work on the TT. And maybe sort a loan to pay the rent.

PVS

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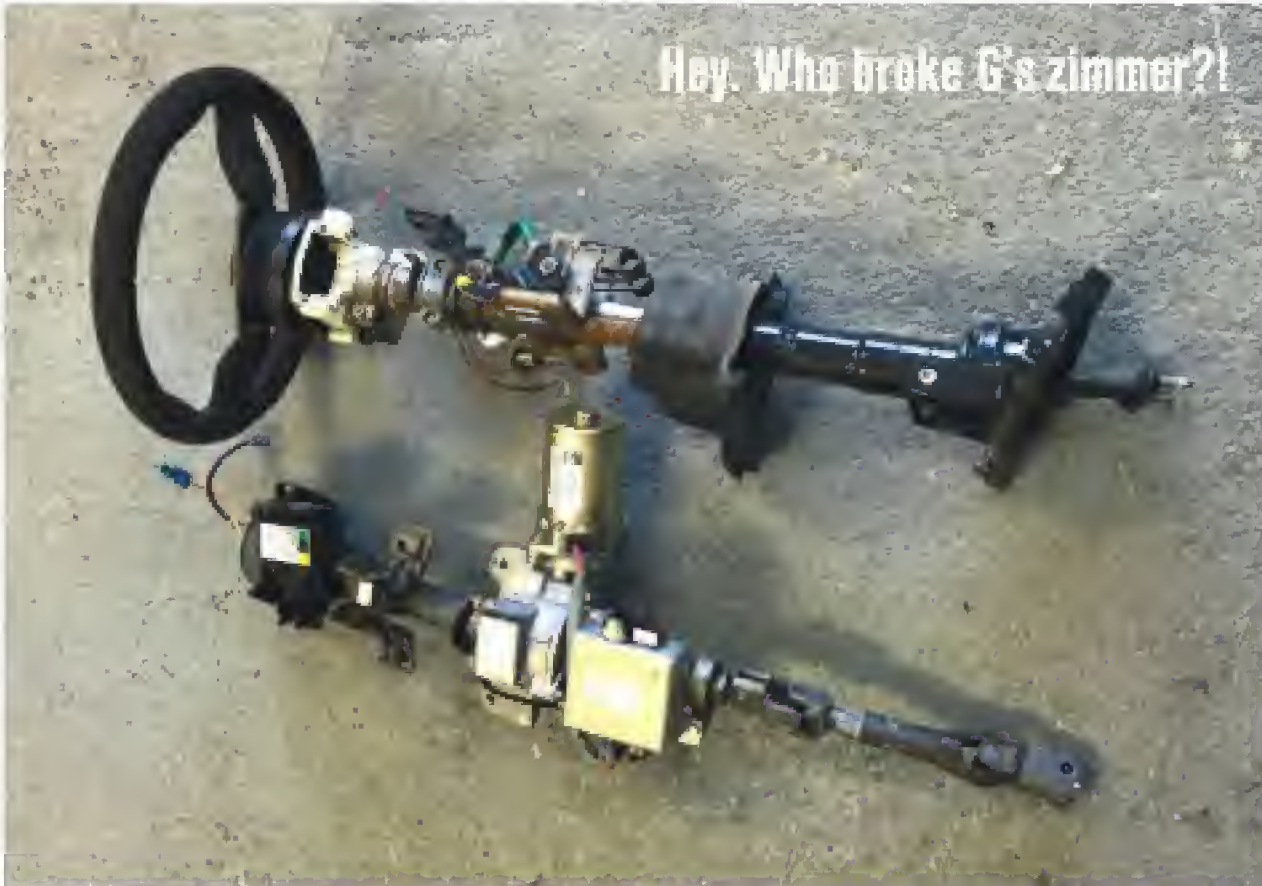
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T&C's: Book online at www.performancevauxhallshow.co.uk. Advanced tickets £22, club discounts apply. £2 Booking fee applies. Tickets on the gate £25, FREE entry for TWO children aged 14 & under when accompanied by a paying adult, any additional children will be charged at £5 each. Warning motorsport can be dangerous. All features are at the discretion of Kelsey Media.

FAST PROJECTS



ZERO EV'S TESLA-POWERED SKYLINE

Fitting a new, sheet-steel dashboard was a breeze. But the electric power-steering? Not so much...

Hey guys. Sorry we've been a bit slack with the updates over the last few issues, but it's only because we've been super busy with the R32 project.

First up was sorting out the interior. As you can see from the pictures we've taken the less is more approach. We've even ditched the brake pedal and steering column. But more about that later.

With the interior already stripped out, the first job was to fabricate a new dashboard. It might look like we've spent hours cutting sheet metal, but as much as I'd like to take credit for it, it really wasn't that much hard work. It was a simple case of making some cardboard templates and then making a cut file for our CNC plasma cutter to do its thing. With a bit of

bracing, some self-tappers and a touch of welding later it was all notched together and slotted in to place.

What wasn't so easy was fitting the electric power steering, which we've taken from a Vauxhall. It took hours just to line it all up and weld in place. We even had to ditch the brake pedal to make it fit, but this gives us the perfect excuse to fit a pedal box. Every cloud has a silver lining and all that.

The new steering works really well and, with it being longer, has allowed me to push my seat back, too.

We've finally got the digital dash mounted in a sensible place too, by utilising the R32's old binnacle unit. It's all starting to come together now. But

there's still an awful lot to do before our Japfest deadline, wish us luck!

See you next month.

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www.zero-ev.co.uk
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NEXT MONTH

We've got yet more wiring to do. Pass the soldering iron!

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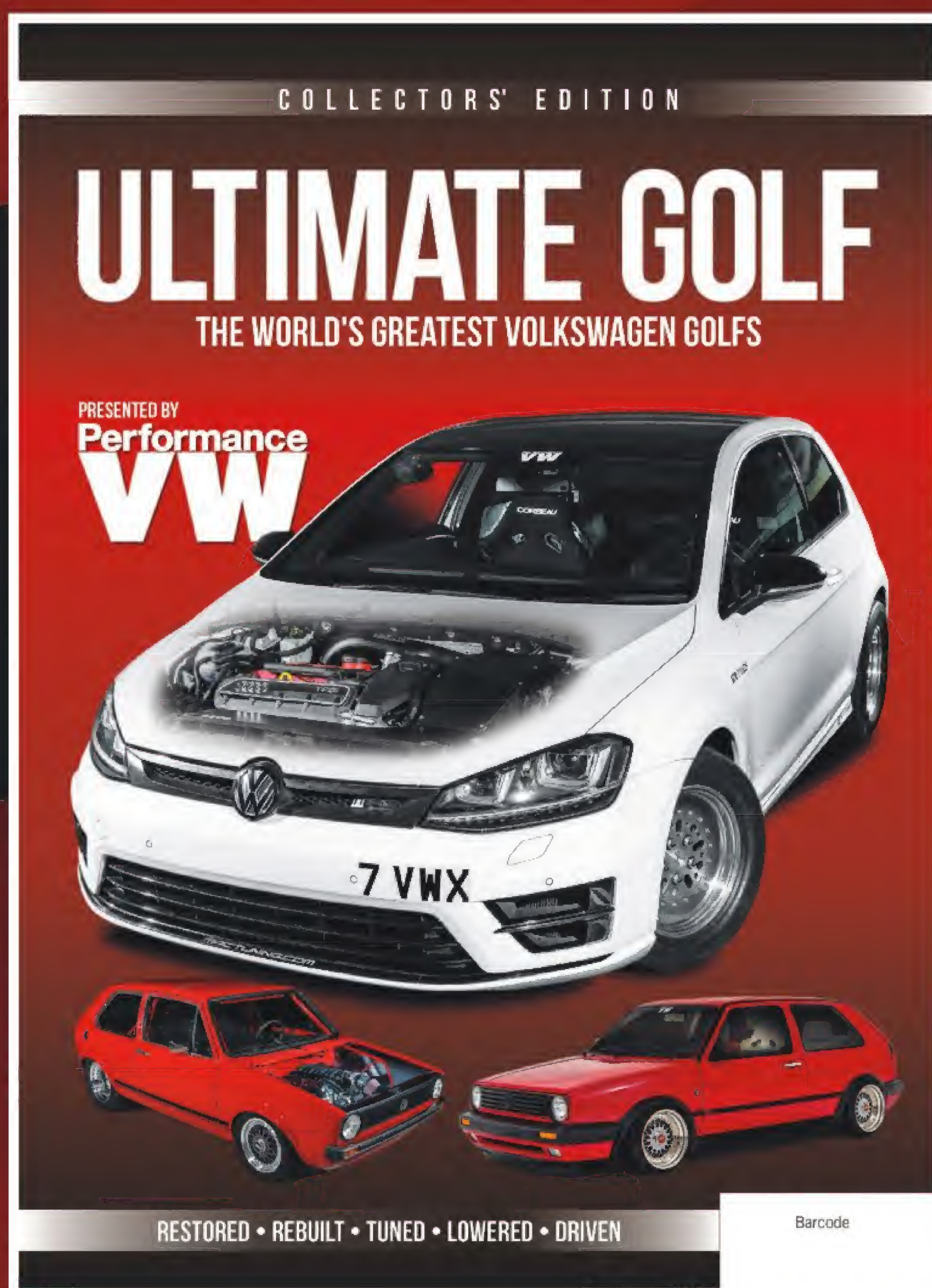
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READERS' RIDES



Photos courtesy of Kristof Van daele

KEN LEEMANS' R32 SKYLINE GTS-T

FC says: The story of Belgium-based Ken's beloved Skyline is one of many ups and downs, but ultimately proves that no matter what life throws at you, with a little focus you really can achieve your dreams. So, grab the popcorn and get ready for the fascinating tale...

Snapping up this GTS-T-badged version of the much-loved R32-shape Skyline soon after he'd learnt how to drive, passionate Ken initially drove the car as his daily as he couldn't afford to keep two motors on the road at once.

A few months into blissful ownership, however, things took a turn for the worse as another driver pulled into Ken and his car unannounced, causing some substantial damage in the process. No bother for Ken, though, who locked himself away with the

car and, fuelled by his insurance payoff, set about making his Skyline even better than it was before.

He utilised not only factory parts to help with the rebuild but also some of the finest aftermarket goodies in the business, to ensure it stood out for all the right reasons.

Now one of the finest-looking stanced Skylines on the block, his faithful coupé features a custom air-suspension system for the ultimate drop, some killer, dished WEDS split rims, finished in gold for ultimate scene points, as well as a raft of exterior modifications to make sure that unique narrow-body look is pulled off in only the best way possible.

Just remind yourself of this inspirational story next time you think the world is getting a little too much...



Main mods:

Custom air-suspension system with Racing Logic coilovers and Kean Suspension air conversion; Cusco strut braces; EBC brakes; WEDS Maverick 709M split rims; GT-R rear wing and front bumper with Type M side skirts and rear spats; Fujimura Auto Rocket Dancer Gurney flap; Top Secret rear diffuser; Bride bucket seats; Takata harnesses; re-built turbo; GReddy BOV; Japspeed FMIC.



SHOW US WHAT YOU'VE GOT!

Here's your chance to show off both your ride and your photography skills in the pages of FC. To enter your car just open a fresh new email, put 'Readers' Rides Submission' in the subject line and send us a few pics of the best bits (larger than 1MB with no ghosting or logos, and you must have the photographer's permission) along with a short spec and a paragraph telling us why your motor deserves to adorn these hallowed pages. Ping the whole lot over to jules.truss@kelseymedia.co.uk and we'll do the rest.



READERS' RIDES



➔ JOE GORDON'S HONDA CIVIC TYPE R

FC says: Looking at the impressive work he's doing to it as we speak, there's only one word to describe Joe's EP3-shape CTR work-in-progress here, and it's 'wild'!

You see, not content with the normally aspirated lairy-ness these VTEC-adorned pocket rockets have from the word go, he's decided to bolt a considerable GT30 turbocharger onto the car's K20 motor. It'll soon be backed up with the likes of a bonnet-exiting exhaust and screamer system, set to ensure a whole new level of FWD bonkers will ensue once he's finished the project off later on this year.

It's not just more power the car is receiving, though, as Joe's also sensibly upgraded the brakes with meaty Megane RS callipers and MTEC discs, before dropping the hatch on some subtle

lowering springs and then adding Corbeau buckets and some Luke harnesses inside, to ensure it's ready to handle a little extra performance.

Stay tuned for what promises to be one of the most insane Civics in the country!



Main mods:

GT30 turbo with AH Fabrications Sidewinder manifold; bonnet-exit screamer and exhaust pipes; Megane RS Brembo four-pot callipers; 50mm lowering springs; Autec alloys.



Mods include a genuine Suzuki Sport strut brace

LEWIS WILLIAMS' SUZUKI IGNIS SPORT

FC says: One of the most overlooked gems of the mid-2000s hot hatch world, the Suzuki Ignis Sport used a comprehensive list of upgrades to completely transform the model from bland grocery-getter to a seriously compelling little ripper in its own right.

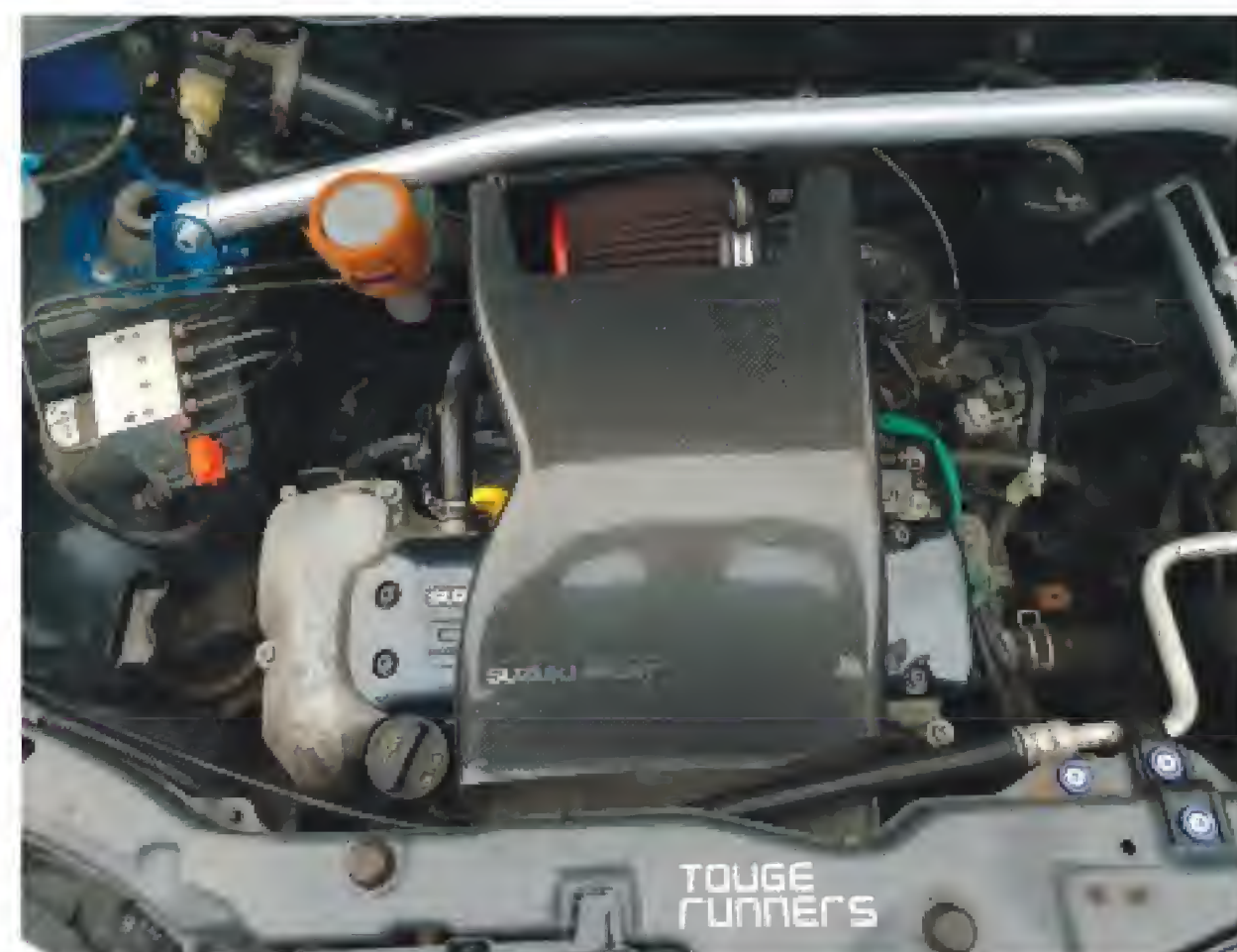
With a bespoke body kit, Recaro seats, re-worked suspension and even a close-ratio gearbox, all of those 100bhp on tap from its 1.5-litre motor could be used in a hilarious manner on both road and track.

Lewis here has taken advantage of the car's often-forgotten status, to snap up a bargain of his own as his very first run-around now he's passed his test. And you know what? His grin is bigger than anyone driving a Corsa as their first set of wheels as a result, that's for sure!

Currently converting his black beauty into something that will be even more fun when taken on track, thanks to choice parts like a genuine Suzuki Sport strut brace and super-rare carbon fibre intake system, the car also receives an adjustable rear Panhard rod and even braided brake lines to sharpen things up and ensure Lewis has only the very best time when hooning. Lovely stuff!

Main mods:

Suzuki Sport carbon fibre air intake system; Xenon headlights; Suzuki Sport strut brace; rear adjustable Panhard rod; braided brake lines.





MARK WEEKS' FORD FOCUS ST

FC says: We all know about the explosive tune-ability of the Ford Focus ST's boosted five-pot motor, but just how far can you seriously take them? Mark here might've just found the answer with his unassuming-looking red example of the hatchback that now produces over 640bhp...

It might look fairly factory from the outside, still boasting its standard alloys and the only visible alterations being that custom rear diffuser and huge KSport stoppers tucked out of the way. But don't think for a second that same subtle tuning ethos has been applied under the bonnet.

You see, the second-gen car's once-220bhp motor has now almost tripled in power, thanks to a hybrid GT35-based boost snail, that itself incorporates a 30-diameter front-end to ensure spool



The once-220bhp motor has now almost tripled in power

times are still nice and speedy. With some clever work to its trick Syvecs ECU, those absurd power figures were finally achieved.

Inside, the Focus benefits from the likes of a full roll cage and Mirco buckets, to give off a serious race vibe and keep Mark in check as he blasts down his local B-road.

Main mods:

KSport big brake kit; hybrid GT35 turbocharger; Mirco bucket seats; Airtec FMIC and inlet plenum; Syvecs ECU; nitrous oxide and methanol injection systems; custom rear diffuser; custom roll cage.

JARED COULSON'S VW T5 TRANSPORTER

FC says: A van with over 300k on the clock might not be the first car you'd imagine to grace the pages of FC. But then again, there's not that many vans out there as epic as Jared from Fix A Wheel's!

The head honcho of the Leicestershire-based alloy wheel repair company has gone to town on his trusty workhorse to ensure it holds more presence than even the most-loved show cars on the scene thanks to some winning mods.

Let's start with the body, which, thanks to a sumptuous re-spray in VW's suave Mulberry hue, makes it look far fresher than any vehicle with this mileage possibly should. The exterior has been set off with other nice touches like a Caravelle front bumper and face-lifted front end.

A significant drop comes courtesy of a bespoke AirREX air suspension system mounted on Gaz shocks, making Jared's choice of Rotiform BLQ hoops look even more epic in the process.

The van's diesel motor now kicks out around 200bhp, thanks to a Revo air filter, Milltek exhaust system and AR Tuning re-map which makes the most of these hardware upgrades. But it's the inside that really blows us away – fully re-trimmed



with plush Mercedes pews on swivel bases up front, with a corner bench area in the rear that really makes use of all that space. Nice work!

Main mods:

Full re-spray in VW Mulberry; face-lift front end; Caravelle front bumper; Sportline lower spoiler; EGR and DPF removal; Revo air filter; Milltek exhaust system; AR Tuning remap; Rotiform BLQ alloys; AirRex air suspension with Gaz shocks; fully re-trimmed interior with Mercedes front seats.

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ARSE END

Quotes of the Month:



Jules: "Do you think I'm going bald? You'd know the signs better than me."
Midge: "Nah I reckon you're all right. It's just a pity your head looks like my nutsack!"



Midge: "You bastard. You've 'shopped me in that picture, haven't you?"
Jules: "No mate. You really are that fat... OK, maybe a little bit. But not much."



Midge: "You want some of my tasty, stolen special sauce?"
Initial G: "Is that what you call it now?"
Midge: "Why do you always have to go there?"



Modify Everything

Here at FC we don't do standard, as Midge's nephews soon found out when he got hold of their Xmas presents. After all, that's the next generation of builders right there, so it's important to start 'em young, right?

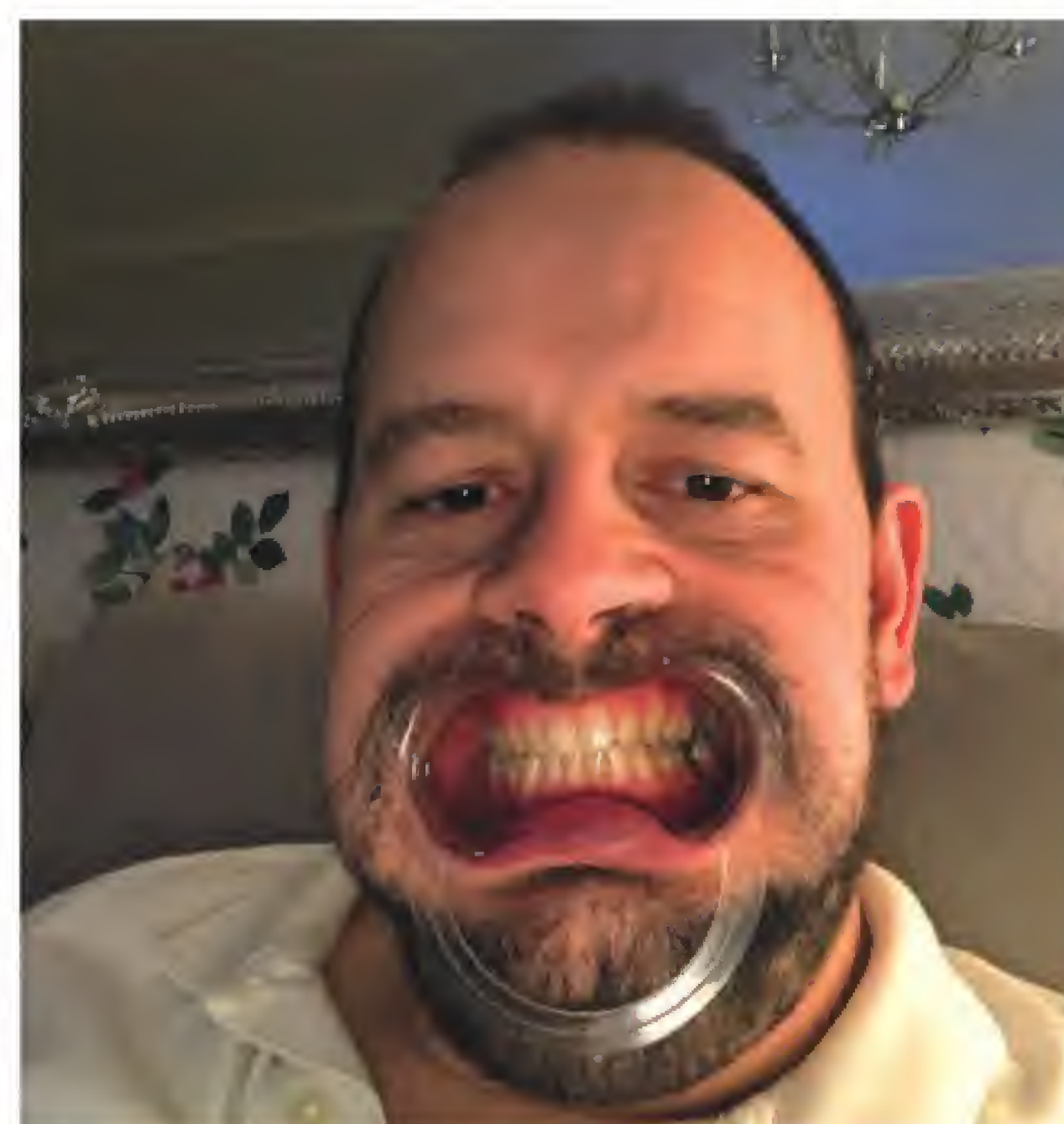
We bet the 1:6-scale Liberty Walk kit and the 9x8-inch Rotiforms are on order by now too. It looks like the socket set and hammer drill will have to wait until you're at least two, boys!



Divorce Time?

If there's one thing that every bloke should covet, it's a massive tool box. We're sure it's one of the 10 commandments or something!

Still, this made us smile when we spotted it in Costco this month. She must be one hell of a woman, your wife, mate – we wouldn't be having none of that!



Games Night

Nope, this isn't, as we first suspected, Jules' secret to consuming an entire Big Mac in a single bite. It's not his world-famous Grommet the dog impression either. No apparently this is what constitutes wholesome family entertainment at Château Slim Jules. It looks like charades and 'poke the poor person with a stick' just aren't enough for the British middle classes these days.



Top Bins

There's a good reason our Midge wears contact lenses, and not just because the years of self-abuse when "working from home" have left him blinder than a bat with second-hand corneas. Nope, it's more that wearing bins makes him look like the love child of Harry Hill and that Greg bloke from MasterChef! Go on, tell us we're wrong...



TOP 5 VIDEOS

CHECK OUT MORE @ WWW.FASTCAR.CO.UK



FORD CABOVER TRUCK

It has to be said that we love a truck here at FC. It also has to be said that Lourenco Customs Ford here is probably the maddest thing ever to roll on, er, six wheels. Epic.
www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/lourenco-customs-ford-cabover-truck



HIN AUSTRALIA

Time to go Down Under. No, not with this fine young fillie (more's the pity), but with the legendary Hot Import Nights. Here's all the action from Sydney's Olympic park...
www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/hot-import-nights-australia-2018



BURNOUT WORLD RECORD

We may be all grown-up (ish) nowadays, but who doesn't love a burnout? Let alone a 126-car world record! You've just got to love those nutty Aussies!
www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/new-car-burnout-world-record



To the Moon and Back

2019 is set to be bigger than ever for FC online, and our Glenda reckons he's gonna be busy taking the site boldly where no website has ever gone before. Of course, he could have just said that though, without confusing us with his random meme making skills. In any case, look out Uranus, he's on his way...



Stirling Work

When Jules said he was going out with Tricky for some Stirling Moss action, we didn't realise the moss in question would be all over his mush. Still, it's not every day you get to razz around in a British racing legend's trials car, so having to have his monthly bath a few weeks early was probably worth it.



210MPH GT-R

The word bonkers is used far too often, but there really is no other way to describe this mental GT-R. Check out this one hitting 210mph in just seven seconds. Christ alive!
www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/2300bhp-nissan-gt-r-hits-210mph-in-7-seconds



PANDEM E46

Will the Pandem revolution ever stop? We certainly hope not! So let's all have a good butcher's at Charly Lannoy's totally bonkers Beemer E46.
www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/pandem-bmw-e46

BLAST FROM THE PAST ISSUE 326 MARCH 2013

Six years and 79 issues ago...

- We went full on Deutsch for this one...
- It's not very often two brothers come out with such epic separate builds. The Perkins boys showed us some proper VAG magic.
- SEMA was a little late this year, or was it the bloke writing it?
- Kevve's immaculate Beemer brought old-skool cool to the next level.
- Miss Jodie Gasson got them out for us, and way before she was universally famous, too.
- What can be more German than a posh Golf on even posher hoops? A VW from Sweden, as it turns out!
- The owner of this crazy Polo emigrated Down Under in 2013 and built this right before he went. We wonder how he's getting on?
- What's this? Jules working on a BMW and Midge on a TT? Some things never change, eh?



NEXT MONTH

In the next issue of **Fast Car*** we get excited over...



Comprehensive Car Culture

- 2.8 VR6 Mk2 Golf
- Rude 'Lude VTEC
- Citrus Citroën DS3
- Awesome Audi TT

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TAS – We head to Japan for the Tokyo Auto Salon

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